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Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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4 April 1994

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israelis Reportedly Offer To Withdraw Within 4 Days

NC0204101694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0925 GMT
2 Apr 94

[Text] Tunis, 2 Apr (MENA)—High-ranking Palestinian sources taking part in the autonomy talks have said that the PLO has received an Israeli offer to withdraw from Gaza and the Jericho area within four days. According to the sources, Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres reiterated this in statements to the Israeli television yesterday.

The sources add that a number of Palestinian deportees have left Tunis for the homeland after Israel has agreed to let 35 deportees return.

Palestinians arriving from the occupied territories have said that the Israeli Army command plans to organize the process of transferring control to the Palestinian national authority before withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho and that the Israeli Army started to evacuate the camp and withdraw much equipment from the Gaza Strip a few days ago.

The Palestinian sources note that the occupation army's senior officers estimate that the army will be prepared to complete its withdrawal within 72 hours of receiving orders to withdraw.

According to Palestinian sources in Tunis, 300 of the Palestine Liberation Army's senior officers will enter Gaza and Jericho to take over control once the expected Israeli withdrawal is completed.

Sha'th: Withdrawal From Gaza, Jericho Started

NC0204170894 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic
1600 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to the Palestinian president, has affirmed that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho has actually begun and vanguards of the Palestinian police will deploy there within a week.

This follows the agreement reached by the Palestinian and Israeli sides on security arrangements for Hebron in the wake of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre. The agreement provides for the deployment of 160 international observers to oversee the arrangements.

Security Committee Delegates Begin Negotiations

Israeli Delegation Arrives

TA0304085694 Jerusalem: Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0700 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] The Israeli delegation to the talks with the Palestinians has arrived in Cairo. The delegation is composed

of Major General 'Uzi Dayan, Brigadier General Yom-Tov Sami', Brig. Gen. Tzvi Stauber, and the Foreign Ministry's legal adviser Yo'el Singer.

Military sources told our correspondent Karmela Menashe that the major obstacles in the discussions with the Palestinians have been removed and Israel can now meet the original timetable.

Sufyan Abu-Zayidah, one of the Fatah leaders in the Gaza Strip, told Qol Yisra'el this morning that the violent incidents in the Gaza Strip were unconnected to the progress made in the peace negotiations. In his opinion, once the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdraws and the Palestinian police force assumes responsibility for maintaining public order, the police will impose their authority on the entire Palestinian population, including the members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

Committee Starts Talks

NC0304123994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1147 GMT
3 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Cairo, 3 Apr (MENA)—The Security Committee, a part of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on ways of implementing the Gaza-Jericho Palestinian autonomy agreement, began meeting in Cairo today. Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, is leading the Palestinian side of this committee, while 'Uzi Dayan, head of the Israeli General Staff's Planning Branch, heads the Israeli side.

The committee is discussing a timetable for the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho and the deployment of Palestinian forces there, including the number of Palestinian police to be stationed in the two areas, their tasks, and the equipment they will use.

Official Palestinian sources told MENA that there are indications that Israel will accept the Palestinian demand for 10,000 Palestinian policemen. Formerly it insisted on limiting the number to only 6,000 policemen. They explained that this change in the Israeli position comes in the wake of the Hebron massacre of hundreds [as received] of Palestinian worshippers.

Representatives of the international observers from Norway and Denmark who will be deployed in Hebron are expected to join the meeting of the Security Committee.

It should be recalled that the observers team will consist of 160 members from Norway, Denmark, and Italy.

The Palestinian delegation has held meetings in Cairo for the past two days to discuss the dispatch of Palestinian police officers to Gaza and Jericho. It has been decided that the first 300 police will enter these areas on Tuesday [5 April]. They will be followed by 1,500 more policemen on Thursday. Others will follow later. They will prepare for taking over control of the self-rule areas of Gaza and Jericho in accordance with the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

Israeli sources in Cairo said that General Amnon Shahaq will arrive Monday morning to participate in the negotiations regarding the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement. [passage omitted]

Other negotiations committees on the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho self-rule agreement are scheduled to begin their meetings tomorrow. [passage omitted]

Sha'th Says Accord on Police 'Close'

*NC0204154494 Paris AFP in English 1448 GMT
2 Apr 94*

[Text] Cairo, April 2 (AFP)—Israel and the PLO are close to agreeing on the deployment of up to 10,000 Palestinian policemen in Gaza and Jericho, chief PLO negotiator Nabil Sha'th said Saturday [2 April].

"An accord on the number of policemen should be concluded during meetings of the PLO and Israeli security committee" which begin here on Sunday, Sha'th said.

The talks would also focus on "preparations for the deployment" of the police and security arrangements for the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

"I don't think there is currently a problem on the number of policemen, which will be around 10,000," Sha'th said after talks here Saturday with Palestinian officials to prepare for the deployment.

Under a security accord signed in Cairo Thursday Israel and the PLO agreed that 160 foreign observers would be deployed in the mosque massacre town of Hebron, and a first contingent of Palestinian police would be sent to Gaza.

Sha'th added that the talks on transferring civilian powers would be held here on Monday, while negotiations on the size of the Jericho autonomous area would be conducted by PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

Release of 'Militant' Prisoners Sought

*NC0304143394 Paris AFP in English 1357 GMT
3 Apr 94*

[Text] Cairo, April 3 (AFP)—The PLO wants Islamic militant prisoners held by Israel to be included in any accord on the release of Palestinian detainees, PLO chief negotiator Nabil Sha'th said here Sunday [3 April].

"All Palestinian prisoners are our responsibility, whether they belong to (the Islamic Resistance Movement) Hamas or not," Sha'th told AFP.

"The question of the release of prisoners will be examined today (Sunday) or tomorrow, and the Hamas prisoners remain the main problem," Sha'th said, adding that the releases would take place in stages after an accord to launch Palestinian autonomy was signed.

Israel and the PLO started intensive negotiations here Sunday to launch Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho within 10 days, after a break of five weeks because of the Hebron massacre.

Israel has freed more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners since the autonomy negotiations began last October.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin announced Sunday that more Palestinian prisoners would be freed and others who had been deported or fled would be allowed to return to the territories.

"These measures will concern only those wanted or expelled, who do not have blood on their hands, grass-roots militants and not frontline political leaders," he said.

A Foreign Ministry official said the majority of the 10,000 Palestinians still in Israeli jails would be released in several stages.

Sha'th on Meeting 13 Apr Deadline

*TA0304155094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English
1500 GMT 3 Apr 94*

[Text] In Cairo, Israeli and Palestinian delegations led by General 'Uzi Dayan and Dr. Nabil Sha'th today resumed negotiations on Palestinian autonomy in Gaza and Jericho.

Gen. Dayan, who heads the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Planning Branch, told reporters that Israel hoped the negotiations would be completed quickly.

Nabil Sha'th told Qol Yisra'el's correspondent in Cairo Arye Gus the PLO want to conclude the agreement by the 13 April deadline in the Declaration of Principles.

[Begin Sha'th recording] We are starting the negotiations on the withdrawal plan from Gaza and Jericho, which is really the completion of what we had started and stopped just because of the massacre. We hope to finish as soon as possible the withdrawal plan, the deployment of the Palestinian police force, and the remaining factors of security in the Gaza and Jericho. The entry of the Palestinian police force will start with first a small group of maybe seven or eight people to go to make the arrangements and then be followed by a larger number to take over some of the camps and to start preparing within a week at most, maybe Thursday. There will be a detailed schedule that will coincide with gradual withdrawal of the Israeli Armed Forces, so that by the end of this period the Palestinian police force will be fully deployed. [end recording]

Israel Consents to Entry of 10,000 Troops

*NC0304172294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1655 GMT
3 Apr 94*

[Text] Cairo, 3 Apr (MENA)—Sources in the Israeli delegation taking part in the Security Committee

meeting that opened in Cairo today under the chairmanship of 'Uzi Dayan, head of the Israeli General Staff's Planning Branch, have said that the meeting discussed the nature of ties between the Palestinian police force and the Israeli troops in legal terms within the framework of a new committee called the New Legal Committee.

The sources pointed out that there is no problem concerning the entry of the Palestinian police force into the self-rule areas in Gaza and Jericho. They added that all matters will be discussed with the Israeli commanders in the field once the vanguards of the Palestinian police force enter these areas.

The same sources have said that Israel has consented to the entry of 10,000 troops of the Palestinian force into Gaza and Jericho and that nine of the commanders of the Palestinian force will head for Gaza and Jericho on Tuesday to discuss with the commanders of the southern and central zones issues related to the deployment of the Palestinian forces and the taking of their positions this week.

The sources pointed out that three battalions, 1,500 troops, of the Palestinian police force will head for Gaza and Jericho on Thursday.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab Maghreb Union Presidential Council Meets

Libya's al-Humaydi Arrives

LD0204100094 Tripoli JANA in English 0838 GMT
2 Apr 94

[Text] Tunis, al-Tayr [April] 2, JAMAHIRYAH NEWS AGENCY—Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi last night arrived by land [words indistinct] to take part in things of the Tunisian [words indistinct] 6th session of the Arab Maghreb Union's Presidential Council due to start its proceedings today in Tunis.

A welcoming ceremony was held for Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi on his arrival to his residence where he was welcomed by the Tunisian Prime Minister Hamed Karoui, the Minister of the Interior Abdallah Kallel and the general delegate of the Great Jamahiriya to Tunisia.

Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi is accompanied by delegation including the secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity and a number of experts.

Maghreb Union Summit Begins

LD0204122694 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] The proceedings of the sixth regular session of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] presidency council started in Tunis at noon today.

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who opened the proceedings of this session, delivered a speech in which he assessed the term during which Tunisia chaired the AMU. We will give you more details about the opening session of this session in our forthcoming news bulletins.

Tunisia's Ben Ali Gives Opening Address

LD0204160194 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Opening speech by Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunis on 2 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of the God, the compassionate, the merciful. Your Excellencies: It give me great pleasure to welcome you to your country Tunisia, which is happy to welcome you as its respected brothers. Today, Tunisia is once again proud to host the sixth session of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] Presidential Council. On your behalf, please permit me to welcome brother Liamine Zeroual, the head of the Algerian state, on the occasion of his joining our council. We would like to renew our congratulations to him on his assumption of this noble responsibility. We wish him every success and all progress in the interest of the brotherly Algerian people. We are sure that his competence, virtues, and belief in Maghreban unity will strongly contribute toward giving more impetus to the march of our union.

I am also pleased to welcome brother militant Yasir 'Arafat, the president of the state of Palestine. Through him, we send humble greetings to the brotherly Palestinian people, and renew our support and backing for their heroic struggle for the recovery of their legitimate rights. [passage omitted]

Your Excellencies: The AMU is committed to working for the sake of rapprochement and harmony amongst nations; it stresses dialogue and negotiations as a method for solving conflicts; and it is loyal to the ties of brotherhood and solidarity within the Maghreban family. As a result, the endeavors of the AMU have continued uninterrupted on the path for finding a peaceful, just, and honorable solution to the conflict existing between the sisterly Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and certain Western states. Maghreban efforts have concentrated on a persistent search for a political solution to this crisis within the framework of respecting international legality and the protection of the dignity and sovereignty of the Libyan people; we also warned against the repercussions of the its suffering as a result of the continuous sanctions, in addition to the negative outcome of this ongoing crisis.

The Maghreban efforts have been joined to those of the Arab family regarding this issue within the seven-man committee; the moves were coordinated on all international levels, mainly at the African and Islamic levels, the Nonaligned Movement, and the United Nations. It is only natural that the AMU should continue its contribution to all endeavors, on all international platforms, to

help find a solution to this crisis and reach a just and honorable political solution. [passage omitted]

Ministers Create Free Trade Zone

LD0304094994 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0700 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Excerpts] On the sidelines of the proceedings of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] summit, an official ceremony was held yesterday at the Foreign Ministry during which 11 Maghrebian agreements on cooperation were signed. These agreements pertain to a number of fields, mainly the economic, cultural and trade sectors. The most important of these agreements is the decision to set up a free trade zone among the five Maghrebian countries.

These agreements were signed on the Tunisian side by Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya; for Algeria by Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri; for Morocco by Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali; for Mauritania by Foreign Minister Mohamed Salem Ould Lekhel; for Libya by Mr. Jum'ha al-Fazzani, General People's Committee secretary for unity. [passage omitted: officials welcome signing of these agreements]

The Tunisian secretary of state for foreign affairs said it has been agreed to start the practical implementation of the free trade zone agreement immediately, and that a working group will begin preparing articles regarding this agreement as from the current month of April.

Algeria's Zeroual Gives Closing Address

LD0304165094 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Excerpts] As I mentioned earlier, the sixth regular summit of the AMU [Arab Maghreb Union] Presidential Council ended in Tunis a few moments ago with the approval of a final communique by the leaders and representatives of the AMU member states. Before the end of the summit, Liamine Zeroual, the head of state, delivered a speech in which he dealt with several issues, including the Arab Maghreb Union's march and current international matters. Here is the full text of the speech of the head of state:

[Begin Zeroual recording] In the name of God, the merciful, and compassionate, Your Excellency the President, Your Excellencies, and Your Excellencies the Ministers, it is a cause for happiness and pleasure that my first visit, since I undertook the duties of head of state, is to fraternal Tunisia in order to participate in this AMU summit. [passage omitted]

Our conviction is that the Maghrebian unity is, at the same time, a wish and a strategic objective for our people.

Mr. President, Your Excellencies, Ministers: We came to take part in this Maghrebian summit at a time when Algeria is entering a new phase of its modern history, and

because this phase cannot leave you indifferent, we consider it our duty to review with you the main points of this phase. Our country is experiencing an important transformation dictated by our people's aspirations and the enormous development it is experiencing, which is aimed mainly at establishing political pluralism and bolstering the foundations of national development so that it [Algeria] will be able to keep, in the best circumstances, abreast of the economic transformations in the world. [passage omitted]

It is obvious that the qualitative change lived by Algerian society cannot be achieved safely, [far removed] from conspiracies and secret schemes. It has become apparent to us that this leading process started to threaten many interests that made some foreign forces, which are known to us, bet on the opposite [as received] and on the exploitation of the opportunity to hit at the unity and stability of our country, hiding behind our true religion and our sacred values.

In this context, we believe that our Maghrebian union has an important role in contributing effectively and seriously to the creation of a suitable and positive atmosphere for bolstering all the efforts made in order to achieve the comprehensive Arab interests. This would allow our Arab nation to obtain a position that suits its weight and its enormous resources in an international community full of risks and challenges.

Today as we monitor, with interest and concern, the events taking place on the Middle East arena, and in Palestine in particular, where the brave Palestinian people are still making sacrifices in order to establish their legitimate rights, we could only express our solidarity with it [the Palestinian people] in its just struggle and our support for its leadership, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization which is fighting a decisive battle within the ongoing peace talks.

We also express our support for other Arab parties concerned with the Middle East peace process. [passage omitted] Also, we will not miss the opportunity to express our deep concern about the sufferings of the fraternal Libyan people as a result of the continuation of the blockade imposed on it, despite the readiness and flexibility expressed by the Libyan leadership in order to deal with the problems existing between it and some Western states. We have great hopes that the recent Libyan initiative would find a positive response that would enable this problem to be solved in a peaceful and final manner within the aegis of the sovereignty of peoples and the respect for their laws.

In our African continent, we are on the eve of the first legislative elections in South Africa and this constitutes a great triumph for a bitter struggle, to which we had the honor to contribute, in order to eliminate apartheid and racism.

If this great aim in South Africa is a cause for satisfaction and optimism, the painful events taking place in many states foretell political, economic, and social decline.

Sources of tension and civil wars have become numerous in a large number of these states to a point where they began to threaten the fate and entities of entire peoples. This constitutes to us a source of anxiety and concern.

Some problems emerged near us on our borders that began to threaten the security and stability of the neighboring friendly states.

Algeria has worked hard and with all its resources toward helping the brother countries in containing their disagreements and solving them by suitable peaceful means.

In this context, our AMU should give the necessary attention to the analysis and recommendations of the Ministerial Council of the Sahel countries, held in Algeria at the end of last year. This is because the security and stability of our region are linked to the security and stability of these countries. [passage omitted]

The proclamation of our union in Marrakesh [in 1989] was followed by a dynamism that made the last five years distinct from the previous years of the modern history of our region. [passage omitted]

Our persistent eagerness to build the edifice of our Arab Maghreb requires us to continue the search for the best ways and means to speed up the achievement of our common interests. We note with great satisfaction the harmony in our opinions in this regard, as was obvious from the important results and recommendations reached by our foreign ministers that were approved yesterday. [passage omitted]

Algeria, which now assumes the honor of the AMU Presidency for the second time, fully appreciates this noble mission. Algeria is fully confident that it can rely on your participation and assistance, and also on the cooperation of your governments so that this year will be a year of new successes that will crown our unification march.

In conclusion, allow me to address my deep thanks and gratitude to the president, government, and people of fraternal Tunisia for the hospitality and warmth with which we, and the accompanying delegations, were met since we arrived in this dear country.

Peace and God's blessings be upon you. [end recording]

Ben Ali Delivers Speech

LD0304162194 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Address by Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to Arab Magreb Union summit in Tunis on 3 April—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate; Your Excellencies, at a time when the proceedings of our council are about to be concluded, I am pleased to express to you once more our pride at hosting

this Maghreb meeting in which we have changed viewpoints on our joint Maghreb action, on the most efficient means to give a boost to the march of our Arab Maghreb, and on the most prominent matters and international issues. [passage omitted]

There is no doubt that any progress on the path of building a unified Maghreb is liable to add strength and competence to the economies of our countries for integration and positive interaction with the international economic community and achieve more equilibrium in the exchange relations with the large economic groups and particularly those with which we have traditional relations in our immediate neighborhood. [passage omitted]

At the end of my speech, your excellencies, I am pleased to express on your behalf and in my name most sincere congratulations to His Excellency President Liamine Zeroual, the head of state of the fraternal People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, on his taking over the Presidency of the Arab Maghreb Union this year. We are convinced that his undertaking these supreme tasks will give our unionist march, thanks to the wisdom and conviction in the Maghreb unity that characterize him, more impetus and progress to the course of building our Arab Maghreb towards achieving the common aspirations of our peoples.

May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you. [applause]

Details of Summit Proceedings Reported

LD0304153794 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio
Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Excerpts] We now join our correspondent Larbi Gharbi live from Tunis to talk to us on the closing session of the AMU [Arab Maghreb Union] summit:

[Gharbi] The proceedings of the sixth ordinary session of the AMU Presidential Council ended today. This summit has adopted a number of articles, agreements, and protocols that had been submitted.

At the start of the closing session, the union's leaders and representatives signed the following chapters:

- To amend Article 12 of the Union's Treaty providing for increasing the number of the Maghreban Shura Council from 20 to 30 members for each member-state;

- Recommendations to change the legal framework of the cooperation agreement;

- To set up the Maghreban Agency for Youth Tourism, and the Maghreban Union of Sport.

The final communique of this summit stated that the council expressed its satisfaction over the positive outcome of the union's continuing work thanks to the periodic meetings of the appropriate bodies and ministerial committees and their councils. Their work gave a

significant impetus to the Maghreban action during the sixth session. The council stressed the need for the continuation of this work to achieve the union's common goals, and respond to the ambitions of the Maghreban people for more practical achievements, and the provision of the appropriate circumstances for the Maghreban integration longed for by everyone, which remains the ultimate goal of the Maghreban people.

The council noted the practical implementation of five agreements recently—a matter that provided the march of integration with significant legal cadres, capable help advances this march. The council also called for the endorsement of the remaining Maghreban agreements; preparation of their protocols and complimentary and executives chapters.

The council renewed its firm commitment to the working program of the union, especially Maghreban projects that could be implemented, taking into account their cost and direct impact on the daily life of the Maghreban citizen.

The Presidential Council expressed its satisfaction over choosing permanent headquarters for the Shura Council and the Judicial Body, the Maghreban Academy for Sciences, the Maghreban university. It stressed the need for supporting these institutions.

Taking all the necessary measures to set up the Maghreban Bank for Investment and External Trade and holding its constituent meeting so that the union would complete the setting up of its institutions, and contribute toward the realization of Maghreban ambitions for a better future based on unity and integration.

The council adopted a recommendation from ministers for foreign affairs on executive programs and the agenda of the meetings of the union's bodies during the seventh presidential session. The council stressed the need for the implementation of the agreements on their specified deadline.

Within the framework of the union's endeavors to underline its belonging to its Arab, Islamic, African, and international regions, the council noted with satisfaction the program of cooperation achieved between the AMU and the Arab League on the one hand, and regional Arab, Islamic, African, European groups, Arab and Islamic development funds, and UN organizations on the other. It also called for the continuation of efforts to define more opportunities of cooperation and integration with these groups, and bolster the path of development and solidarity on the basis of common development goals for the sake of the common interest.

The council also praised the continued Maghreban-European dialogue at the level of parliaments and institutions; it also hailed the meetings that took place between the Maghreban Shura Council and the European Parliament, and with the European Economic and Social Council.

Regarding relations between the Maghreban Union and the European Union, the council expressed its readiness to resume this dialogue on the basis of equal and harmonious interests, in a way that serves the meaning of the common development, the rights of the Maghreban community living in Europe, and the collective responsibility to protect peace and security on both sides of the Mediterranean.

Regarding the situation of the Maghreban community living abroad, the Presidential Council expressed its deep concern over the mounting wave of violence against this community because of the spread of extremism and violence directed against it. The Council called on the European states to take firm and necessary measures to eradicate this phenomenon. [passage omitted]

The council reviewed the political developments witnessed by the Maghreban, Arab, African, and Mediterranean region as well as international arenas, and it expressed its satisfaction over the use of dialogue and negotiations regarding most issues of common interest, which permitted the coordination of positions and had a positive impact on supporting just causes.

The council praised the efforts deployed during the past presidential term regarding the consolidation of the union's relations at regional and international levels; on the path of establishing international peace and security. The council expressed its efforts to help provide an international order that is based on international law and legality, the respect of human rights, the use of the spirit of cooperation and solidarity among all nations; condemnation of all forms of terrorism, violence, and extremism; the commitment to the respect, the sovereignty of states and non-interference in their internal affairs—a fact that would firmly establish the pillars of peace and stability.

On the other hand, the Presidential Council expressed its deep concern over the suffering of the Libyan Arab people because of the ongoing embargo, its negative impact, and its ensuing damage on these people and on all Maghreban peoples, and on the Maghreban march of integration. The council expressed its resolve to carry on with its endeavors at union level, and also at a level of the Arab seven-man committee that is entrusted with finding an immediate settlement to the current crisis between the Libyan Jamahiriyyah and some Western states.

When reviewing the peace process in the Middle East, the council expressed its great concern over the deteriorating situation in the Arab occupied territories; it expressed its condemnation against the continuing occupation, and the oppressive measures applied against the defenseless civilian Palestinians; and the repeated humiliated attacks against the Palestinians. The council voiced its backing for the just cause of the Palestinian people and its leadership.

The Presidential Council's final communique also dealt with a number of hot-spots in the world—at their forefront the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis; the Yemeni and Somali crises, in addition to other conflicts. The council called for settling these crises through peaceful means. [passage omitted]

Arab League Chief Views Libyan-Western Crisis

NC0104193094 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 1620 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Interview with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid by Safa' Hijazi in Cairo, date not given; from the "Arabs' Home" program—recorded]

[Text] [Hijazi] Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid, the Libyan-Western crisis was a topic at the Arab League's 101st session. News agencies have quoted British officials as saying that the International Court of Justice [ICJ] only looks into conflicts between nations, not into criminal cases. They were commenting on the Arab League's proposal that the two Libyan suspects appear before a Scottish court affiliated with the ICJ. What is your reaction?

['Abd-al-Majid] I have heard these statements. I believe the British Foreign Office officials know full well, as do I, the jurisdiction of the ICJ. The Arab League has never thought that this case is within the jurisdiction of the ICJ. This is the alphabet of the international law. They say this is not the business of the ICJ. I have never said it is. I am talking about a Scottish court applying Scotland's law but having its seat in the ICJ in The Hague; the ICJ will have nothing to do with the case. I hope this clarification will serve as a response to the statement of the official British Foreign Office spokesman, who, I am sure, knows very well what I am talking about.

The idea, as discussed by the seven-member committee and in the meeting of the Arab foreign ministers, is that we apply Scottish law, as the incident took place in Scotland. Judicial rules say that when an incident takes place in a country, the law of that country is applied. As concerns Libya, it is only natural for any country not to hand over its subjects for trial in foreign countries. The Libyan position in this regard is fully in keeping with the international law. The suspects can appear before a Scottish court in accordance with Scottish law, and, at the same time, the trial can take place in a neutral country, whether the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, or any other country. But the ICJ will have nothing to do with the case.

Why Scottish law? I would like to explain an important point here. In criminal cases, Scottish law is more flexible than British law. A Scottish court examining a case has three options concerning the defendant: guilty, not guilty, not proven [previous five words in English]. In Britain, courts apply what they call common law [previous two words in English], and they have only two

choices against the defendant: guilty or not guilty. Scottish law, therefore, is more flexible. The painful Lockerbie incident took place in Scotland. So, we say let us apply Scottish law. Libya accepted that, and the Arab League Council ratified it. We are talking about a Scottish court, with Scottish judges, and perhaps other judges. The Scottish law will be applied where the suspect—who is innocent until proven guilty—is given a chance to be found not-proven. That is the whole thing.

[Hijazi] We were optimistic that an Arab court of justice would see the light, and that the Arab League Charter would be amended during the Arab League Council session. Why were these two projects postponed?

['Abd-al-Majid] Concerning the Arab court of justice plan, I would like to give the credit to its rightful owners; namely, those who laid down the Arab League Charter in 1945. Article 19 of the Charter mentions this court. It was conceived in 1945, but it never came to be. The idea was revived now so that the court can serve as a mechanism to resolve Arab conflicts by peaceful means. Going to the court is optional; no country can be forced to go to the court. The OAU established a mechanism to resolve African conflicts. As regards the amendment of the Arab League Charter, this has been under consideration for many years, but it did not happen either. There have lately been many changes that have pushed us to think of some important amendments, particularly adopting resolutions by a two-thirds majority rather than unanimity. Current Arab circumstances, and I understand this, prompted some countries to ask for a postponement of this issue. But both subjects, an Arab court and an amendment of the Charter, are still open; the door is not closed.

'Abd-al-Majid Fears Aggravation of Arab Disputes

NC0204065094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0610 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 2 Apr (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid has emphasized that Arabs need peace among themselves and to bring about accord as soon as possible.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM published today, 'Abd-al-Majid said that it is not possible to reconcile Arabs and Israelis and establish Arab-Israeli peace so long as the Arab nation remains fragmented and riven by conflicts. He said this when referring to the fact that although three years have passed since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the repercussions of that crisis still reflect negatively on the Arabs' active march. He said he fears Arab disputes might grow worse in the coming period, particularly border disputes.

The Arab League secretary general called for speeding up the amending of the current Charter to permit the adoption of decisions by majority vote rather than by consensus. He also called for setting up an Arab court of justice.

Touching on the call for an Arab summit to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Arab League, 'Abd-al-Majid hoped this call will be received favorably. However, he stressed the need for a favorable climate for this and emphasized that good preparation for such a summit would be inter-Arab candidness as a basis for reconciliation.

Commenting on the Lockerbie crisis involving Libya and some Western states, 'Abd-al-Majid pointed out that the Arab League Council has called for trying the Libyan suspects in the International Court of Justice with the participation of Scottish judges. He reiterated the League's support for Libya's right to exercise sovereignty on its territory and to refuse to hand over its citizens.

The Arab League secretary general added that he will continue his efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Lockerbie crisis.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat's Cairo Visit Postponed Due to Engagements

NC0304142094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1403 GMT
3 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 3 Apr (MENA)—An official Palestinian source has told MENA that the visit to Cairo by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has been postponed to Tuesday [5 April] or Wednesday.

The source pointed out that the postponement is due to Egyptian and Palestinian engagements.

'Arafat was expected to arrive in Cairo this evening or tomorrow morning for consultations with President Husni Mubarak and senior Egyptian officials on the ongoing peace negotiations with Israel in Cairo to pave the way for implementing the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

The agreement is expected to be signed in Cairo before 13 April.

Al-Tibi on Deportees, Prisoners, Hebron Agreement

TA0104181594 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel
1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Interview with Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, adviser to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, by Yoni Ben-Menahem on 1 April; place not given]

[Text] [Ben-Menahem] Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, some reports have indicated that the Cairo agreement also includes a special clause relating to the repatriation of Palestinian deportees. Is this correct?

[Al-Tibi] The fact is that the issue of Palestinian deportees was raised during the recent meetings in Cairo. The Israeli side agreed in principle to the repatriation of

more than 30 Palestinian deportees. This issue will be finalized at the beginning of next week.

[Ben-Menahem] When will the deportees return?

[Al-Tibi] This hinges on the talks that will begin next week in Cairo. The names of the returning brother deportees will be announced after the Cairo meetings next week.

[Ben-Menahem] Do the deportees belong only to Fatah?

[Al-Tibi] The list agreed on by the Israelis includes Palestinian deportees from various factions.

[Ben-Menahem] There are also reports indicating that Israel has agreed to release a large number of security prisoners.

[Al-Tibi] This is an extremely important issue for the Palestinian side. The Gaza-Jericho agreement cannot be signed or implemented without a scheduled release of the brother Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. This position has been firmly raised with the Israeli side. The Israelis have agreed to it in principle. Talks are to be held later on about the timetable as well as on how and when the brother detainees will be released. I can say that in our contacts we recently focused particularly on the sick prisoners, because the number of sick prisoners in Israeli jails has increased. This issue should be given a very high priority. The Palestinian leadership is aware of this issue, has raised it repeatedly, and it has been accepted in principle. The details will be finalized in the upcoming round of talks.

[Ben-Menahem] There is criticism in the Palestinian street in Hebron as well as by the Palestinian opposition that the international presence in Hebron does not provide the necessary protection for the citizens.

[Al-Tibi] In fact, the international presence—160 international observers—does not provide absolute protection for the Palestinians in Hebron. Although this force does not provide protection, it gives an important political meaning to a multinational presence in Hebron in the occupied territories. This is the first thing. Second, the issue is not over yet. The more important issue is the evacuation of Jews from Hebron. Settlement presence in Hebron is a time bomb. We will wait a short while to see what the Israeli Government's next step will be on this matter. We have to wait a short while and see this step.

[Ben-Menahem] But what can you say to the man in the street about his protection?

[Al-Tibi] As I have said, undoubtedly international presence by itself does not provide the required protection for the Palestinians in Hebron.

[Ben-Menahem] Then why did the PLO agree to this?

[Al-Tibi] Because this has been a political demand by the PLO and the Arab side for scores of years. International presence in the occupied territories means that the

occupation is about to end and that we are on our way to sovereignty. However, with regard to reducing friction and providing protection for the Palestinians, this will come by evacuating Jewish settlers from the heart of Hebron. We expect the Israeli Government to take a step shortly in this sphere.

[Ben-Menahem] Have you obtained any agreement on this issue?

[Al-Tibi] We will wait a short while and see what step the Israeli Government will take in this sphere.

'Urayqat Interviewed on Hebron Agreement

JN0104204494 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1742 GMT 1 Apr 94

["Text"] of telephone interview from Jericho with Sa'ib 'Urayqat, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Cairo talks with Israel and chairman of the Palestinian election committee, by Radio Monte Carlo correspondent Salim Badawi, date not given; from the weekly "The Event" program—recorded]

[Text] [Badawi] How do you view the Hebron agreement and the importance of its achievements on the Palestinian question?

['Urayqat] In fact the problem lies with the settler hotbeds in the heart of Hebron. Therefore, and as you have noticed from the beginning, the Palestinian side has always insisted that the settlements be removed from the heart of the town. This did not happen. Therefore, and regrettably, the problem will not be solved, and protection for the Palestinian people cannot be realized unless the settlers are evacuated from Hebron.

Yet, we will not try to belittle the fact that a paragraph in the UN resolution concerning the existence of an international presence has been implemented. We do not want this international presence to be a means of beautification, a means of face-saving. What is required is real protection for the Palestinian people.

As we notice in the agreement, the powers of these [observer] forces are really very limited and will leave things in one way or another in the hands of the Israeli Army, which provides protection for the settlers and which has been unable to protect the Arabs. In fact, the Israeli Army has participated in massacres of Palestinians. I am afraid that the real aim of the UN Security Council Resolution No. 904 on protecting the Palestinian people; the real aim of our call for the past 27 years to realize international presence, is not in fact practically intended to realize the aim of providing real protection for the Palestinian people.

[Badawi] Here we must point out that the agreement stipulated the presence of an international team only in the city of Hebron whereas Resolution 904 stipulates international presence in all parts of the occupied territories. Therefore, what you say is in agreement with what

the PLO has said; that the security agreement is a first step toward implementing the resolution? Do you expect other steps to follow?

['Urayqat] As I said, the international protection is in accordance with the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, especially concerning civilians in times of war. The agreement did not even allude to the Fourth Geneva Convention. Israel continues to reject this convention. Therefore, naturally what is required is protection for the Palestinian people all over the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967.

The issue is not related to the presence and the size of this presence. It is related to the powers and substance of this presence. As we have seen, the agreement is a step but will not meet any requirements. For instance, let us take these settlers in Hebron, the Kakh group. These people loudly claim that they intend to force the Arab inhabitants off their land. They will not stop at anything. I will not be surprised if a number of these settlers attack these Norwegian, Italian, and Danish forces and kill three or four. Then public opinion in Italy, Denmark, and Norway will rise and demand that their forces leave. Giving the power to the Israeli Government is in itself stripping the international protection of any substantive power to take practical measures.

We have never sought to safe face at any time. We are seeking international protection for our people because there are real dangers threatening the lives of 2 million Palestinians.

[Badawi] So, Dr. 'Urayqat, based on the agreement, how can the international team's presence contribute to entrenching the aspired stability as long as the observers' mission is neither military nor one of security?

['Urayqat] Frankly speaking, there will be no stability as long as the roots of the problem still exist. The cause of this problem is the existence of settlements. I believe that without evacuating settlers from the heart of Hebron, as a first step, and consequently putting the issue of settlements on the negotiations agenda, we will not achieve the aspired objective. Settlements are time bombs and mines that could explode at anytime. We should wait and see when another bomb will explode in a church, a mosque, a farm, or a university. What is really required is to provide true protection of the Palestinian people based on the Fourth Geneva Convention, and not procedural issues through which these forces' mission will be emptied of any meaning.

[Badawi] Dr. 'Urayqat, before we continue talking about the security agreement on Hebron, I would like you to listen with me to the position of the Palestinian opposition inside the occupied territories toward this agreement. This position was expressed earlier to "The Event" program by Riyad al-Maliki, official spokesman of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] in the occupied territories:

[Al-Maliki] Certainly, the agreement has come to abrogate UN Security Council Resolution 904 on the Hebron massacre and the need for the presence of international forces to protect the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. The agreement on dispatching international observers greatly undermines Resolution 904. It seems that the PLO has contributed, together with Israel, to dealing a blow to that resolution, and decided not to comply with this resolution. The PLO is greatly responsible for this. We are talking about 160 international observers who cannot protect our people in Hebron. As Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres today said that 60 of them will be observers and 100 will help the municipality execute the development and economic projects. This means that there will be no international security presence. The issue of security in Hebron does not exist at all. We know full well that the agreement does not tackle the basic conditions the PLO has set, following the Hebron massacre, for going back to the negotiating table. Among these conditions are the evacuation of settlers from Hebron, disarming settlers, and using a Palestinian police force. What the PLO got is less than what is required. This conflicts completely with our masses' needs in Hebron and the rest of the occupied territories. We know that 'Arafat has tried to exploit the massacre to arrange his affairs in Hebron at the expense of the forces which reject the agreement. It is clear that he has formed a council for the Hebron Governorate instead of the emergency council on which all the functionaries in the city agreed. He has also formed an investigation committee in parallel with that formed by the awqaf committee in Hebron. He also nominated Mustafa 'Abd-al-Nabi al-Natshah to entrench his powers there, taking into consideration that the Palestinian masses in Hebron call for honest and free democratic elections to elect a municipal council after the last formation which took place in 1976. In other words, 18 years after this issue. We know that the negotiations on the Gaza-Jericho agreement began yesterday after the signing of an agreement. This is the pretext 'Arafat was looking for. It is an excuse which is even worse than the offense for which it was offered. 'Arafat believes that he can convince our people in the occupied territories on this issue. 'Arafat's credibility has sunk to a new low. He has also lost his legitimacy. Neither 'Arafat, nor his policy has any credibility in the occupied territories as a result of this latest agreement.

[Badawi] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, we have just listened to the opinion of Riyad al-Maliki, official PFLP spokesman in the occupied territories. In his opinion, the agreement undermines the UN resolution. So, you agree with him on this. According to Riyad al-Maliki, the agreement does not tackle the basic conditions the PLO has set following the Hebron massacre. However, Dr. 'Urayqat, despite this, you have returned to the negotiating table.

['Urayqat] In the final analysis, I don't think we are talking about who is for or against the agreement. Objectively speaking, the agreement does not provide the required protection. But to single out 'Arafat, or any

other Palestinian circle, for blame does not make sense. We should now direct all our energies to securing protection for the Palestinian people. As brother Riyad al-Maliki and others know, a committee was formed by President 'Arafat months ago to prepare elections for the Hebron municipal council and the local government. These elections will take place. We are on the verge of signing an accord with the European Union with the participation of another 22 countries to join this program. A town council will be elected in accordance with the existing law, and that is the Jordanian law, in line with the Geneva Convention.

The laws that were in force before 1967, before the occupation, are supposed to apply. Municipal committees must be named for a limited period of time ahead of these elections. However, we must also bear in mind that, as a Palestinian side, we are trying to bring about the best possible conditions for the Palestinian people. As far as the other side is concerned, we are coming up against Israeli intransigence and procrastination. We are also dealing with a U.S. Administration totally biased toward Israel. If we are to apportion blame, it must be directed at the Israeli Government, which is responsible for the massacres and the absence of security. Fundamentally, negotiations must bring about an end to occupation. In every step we take, we must act objectively and dispassionately. We should not be distracted from the real problem, and that is occupation, and as brother Riyad has indicated, we should not be looking for scapegoats to explain away our problems.

[Badawi] But it remains the case that the PLO has backtracked on two fundamental demands. First, the evacuation of 400 settlers from the heart of Hebron. Second, the deployment of a Palestinian police force in the city.

['Urayqat] The stationing of Palestinian forces while Israel still maintains a presence is absolutely rejected. This does not amount to a retreat. To bring in Palestinian police or security forces to take orders from Israeli forces is just illogical. It was right that this issue was not brought up to begin with. There is no retreat here. According to the Oslo agreement, the Palestinian security forces will be responsible for public order in any of the areas vacated by the Israeli forces. To introduce Palestinian forces when the Israeli military and occupation are still there is unacceptable. Our rejection does not represent a retreat. As for the first point, let me repeat with all objectivity, this accord insofar as international protection is concerned, falls short of our target. Only by the settlers pulling out from the heart of Hebron will our target have been reached. This is because they are at the root of the problem. A disease is cured not by addressing its symptoms but rather by tackling its roots.

[Badawi] What about the disarming of the settlers? Resolution 904 provided, among other things, for disarming the settlers. But the agreement made no reference to that.

[Urayqat] That was a point that we raised from the start. But, in actual fact, every settler is a reservist in the Israeli Army. If he is not disarmed as a settler, will he be disarmed as a reservist in the Israeli military? When the criminal Goldstein committed his terrorist act at the al-Ibrahimi Mosque, he was wearing a military uniform of a reserve captain in the Israeli military. Let us be honest. We are not just after disarming the settlers while they remain in their places. They are reserve soldiers as well. What is required is to evacuate the settlers and disband the settlements in the hearts of such cities as Hebron, Gaza, and Nablus, and then place the settlement issue at the top of the agenda of any negotiations. Without the settlement issue being the first item on an agenda, any negotiations will be pointless.

[Badawi] Why do you think Yitzhak Rabin decided not to evacuate the settlers even though eight out of 15 members of the Israeli Government supported such a move?

[Urayqat] I do not think Rabin is a decisive person. He has failed to be bound by what he signed in Oslo or what Israeli negotiators signed in other places. Therefore, I consider Rabin to be wholly responsible for the way the peace process has evolved. I think that the peace process is headed for collapse. The U.S. Administration, which has conducted itself according to a damage control and crisis management mentality with a view to lifting Israel from crisis, and in the meantime brushing aside the true requirements for making peace, must share the responsibility.

[Badawi] According to the agreement, the negotiations should be intensified to make up for the wasted time. How will this be translated into actions?

[Urayqat] The question is very realistic. The negotiations are not an objective. Emphasis should be on the contents of the negotiations. As I said, after the holy al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre, it became clear, practical, and logical that no negotiations should take place unless the subject of settlements is on top of their agenda, because the peace process, as the letter of invitation to Madrid and the Oslo agreement stipulate, call for ending the occupation, which means the principle of land for peace in accordance with Resolution 242 and not reorganizing occupation as Rabin is trying to do. Occupation is a model that failed after 26.5 years. We have to be aware that what Rabin is trying to do now is just an attempt to reorganize the occupation, and not to end the occupation.

[Badawi] Dr. Urayqat, the United States expects substantial Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho before the end of this April. Is this in line with the call for respecting the date of 13 April? Is it possible to expect completing the Israeli withdrawal before 13 April as the Declaration of Principles agreement stipulates?

[Urayqat] As I said, the agreement is clear. Its points are coherent although all its articles lack mechanisms for implementation. Despite much talk about peace and

withdrawal, Rabin has never been committed to any date on which there had been agreement. I do not think that he is going to be committed to the date of withdrawals as decided by the agreement. Even if we speak about withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, there are many issues that should simultaneously take place.

[Badawi] For example?

[Urayqat] Withdrawal should be withdrawal and not redeployment. The agreement called for redeployment in the rest of the West Bank and not in Gaza and Jericho. If the settlements remain in these areas with Israeli presence, I believe this will not be a withdrawal. I also believe that the U.S. Administration, which failed to take a just stand due to its intransigence, full bias, and blind policy in favor of Israel, is using the peace process just for public relations purposes, nothing more.

[Badawi] Then the subject of withdrawal is still unresolved concerning some...

[Urayqat interrupting] It is unresolved concerning many points, especially security issues.

[Badawi] Between 100 and 120 officers of the Palestine Liberation Army will arrive in Gaza Strip early next week as the first unit of the Palestinian police. When will their mission begin on the ground?

[Urayqat] In fact, I do not know many details about this subject. All I can say is that the entry of any forces should be accompanied by a timetable and procedures that should be taken. Until now, I do not have any information on how these forces will enter or their tasks—whether these forces will be the vanguards which will arrange the situation or which will prepare for the entry of other forces. I cannot go into detail on this subject because I lack complete information.

[Badawi] Dr. Urayqat, a question to you as head of the Palestinian elections committee. According to the agreement that was signed, negotiations are to be held soon on the transfer of power from the Israelis to the Palestinian authority, that in turn, will take care of elections expected in the occupied territories next July. Can this subject be amended or delayed?

[Urayqat] In fact, there was a Palestinian and presidential decision on 20 November concerning the formation of the elections and local government committee which I chair. The Israeli procrastination, and its failure to abide by the set timetable signed in Washington means that it is practically impossible to have the elections on 13 July. International groups worked with us last month. A timetable was approved on general elections, and it sets a 15 October 1993 date [as heard] because the electoral process does not take place immediately after a political agreement is signed by leaders. It is a tiring and long process. It requires training, preparations, a census. It also requires sending many people abroad for training.

These people then come back to train others. Therefore, the realistic date for the general political elections was set for next 15 October.

[Badawi] My final question is on the resumption of bilateral negotiations in Washington. Will you head the Palestinian delegation to the U.S. capital?

[Urayqat] I do not know yet if my tasks within the elections committee will allow me to go or not.

[Badawi] Will the Palestinian delegation be present in the bilateral negotiations hall?

[Urayqat] The decision is left to the Palestinian leadership and not me.

[Badawi] Thank you Dr. Sa'ib Urayqat.

Negotiator 'Asfur on Withdrawal, 'Arafat's Return

JN0304180094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1430 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Interview with Hasan 'Asfur, deputy head of the Palestinian delegation to the Cairo talks with Israel, by Sha'ul Menashe in Cairo; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Menashe] The PLO is scheduled to take over in Gaza and Jericho shortly. Does it have a list of priorities ready for these territories?

[Asfur] There is no doubt that it will be a historic event when the PLO and the national Palestinian authority take over in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area. It will mark the first step in building the Palestinian homeland. We think that security for the Palestinians in Gaza and Jericho and the rebuilding of the national economy that has suffered long under occupation will top the agenda.

[Menashe] What does the PLO leadership think relations will be like with the forces opposed to the peace process, notably the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas?

[Asfur] It is not possible to say that there is opposition while the PLO exists. This is because the PLO is the national framework encompassing all the Palestinian political forces. However, there is opposition within the framework of the PLO to the Declaration of Principles. This opposition is open and always speaks out. The PLO, as the leadership of the Palestinian people, handles opposition within the framework of the Palestinian people's democratic principles consecrated by long years of national Palestinian struggle. We do not think that the democratic principles have been compromised. Our people's national forces will uphold these values. We think that political opposition within the framework of the PLO will respect the values and political traditions of the Palestinian people on which the PLO was built.

[Menashe] Do you have a contingency plan to counter violence, if, God forbid, it materialized?

[Asfur] Let's not discuss such complications just yet. I am confident, however, that the political forces of opposition are sufficiently enlightened to express their opinion within the framework of the Palestinian political legitimacy.

[Menashe] One last question: According to Palestinian sources cited in Tunis yesterday, Mr. 'Arafat, after assuming power, will visit the territories, along with 120 Palestinian figures. Can you confirm that report?

[Asfur] As for the logistics of President 'Arafat's return to the occupied Palestinian territory after the Israeli withdrawal, these have yet to be worked out. I think it is premature for me to discuss this matter. We are going to take over the national Palestinian authority. We have been working on that for some time. We think our people are looking forward to that moment. The PLO and its affiliated bodies are poised to take over.

Qaddumi Says Rabin 'Does Not Want Peace'

NC0104191294 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 1620 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Interview with Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, by Safa' Hijazi in Cairo, date not given; from the "Arabs' Home" program—recorded]

[Text] [Hijazi] Security Council Resolution 904 has condemned Israel for the massacre at the al-Ibrahimi Mosque. After that, Israel bombed some buildings in Hebron, in defiance of the Security Council resolution and the world community. How will the confrontation with Israel end?

[Qaddumi] I do not believe that ending the confrontation with Israel is a simple matter. Israel continues to occupy Palestinian land. Ending the occupation will end the confrontation. Without ending the Israeli occupation, the confrontation with Israel will continue using all means. Unfortunately, this community has proved to be one that harbors rancor toward the Palestinians and the Arabs. [Former Israeli Foreign Minister] Abba Eban said this in a lecture he delivered at George Washington [as heard], when he said that it is now the duty of Israel to restore its democratic nature, which it claimed to have had.

[Hijazi] What is the mechanism for implementing the Security Council resolution?

[Qaddumi] The Security Council is responsible for implementing its own resolution. It urged the cosponsors of the peace conference to use all methods to provide protection for and ensure the safety of the Palestinian civilians inside the occupied territories. Among these measures is the dispatch of international troops, the disarming of settlers, and the adoption of other measures, such as removing the Israelis from Hebron. This is because their presence creates friction and constitutes a provocative act intended to perpetuate such incidents.

[Hijazi] Following the Hebron massacre, Israel announced its intention to assemble settlers in settlements close to each other and away from Palestinians in the occupied territories. Do you think Israel is serious about this?

[Qaddumi] Israel is now divided. We know very well that there are people who want to resolve the problem, but Yitzhaq Rabin in particular is a man who indeed does not want peace. He has postponed the withdrawal and he does not honor anything that he says, unfortunately. He says that these deadlines are not sacred. We have cautioned the United States and Israel about the consequences of these actions, but the Israeli Army put pressure on Rabin. This became clear during the talks held in Cairo, Davos, Oslo. Yitzhaq Rabin does not want to honor this agreement. He says something but does not honor it. He is acting in collusion with the Army people and with the settlers. I believe that continuing this policy will finish off the peace process. Had the withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho not been delayed, these incidents would not have happened. Rabin has given the opposition more cards to strengthen its position, and here are the results, but they will fall on Rabin's head, God willing.

Target Date Set for Police Arrival in Gaza, Jericho

JN0204083994 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
2 Apr 94 p 1

[By "JORDAN TIMES staff reporter" Mariam M. Shahin]

[Text] Amman—The implementation of the Gaza-Jericho First accords will begin this week with the entry of up to 300 Palestinian policemen from Jordan and Egypt into Jericho and Gaza, Palestinian officials in Amman and Tunis confirmed Friday [1 April].

Ten Palestinian police officers are expected to head for the occupied territories on Tuesday to prepare logistics for the entry of the Palestinian policemen; 150 of whom would be stationed in Jericho and another 150 in Gaza.

Tunis based Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials said that "no dates were for certain." Amman based officials tipped Thursday April 7 to be the date of entry for 150 policemen from Amman into Jericho and 150 policemen from Egypt into Gaza.

"I can confirm that the implementation of the Oslo accords will begin this week but the exact timetable is not yet known," Marwan Kanafani, the spokesman for Palestine President Yasir 'Arafat told the JORDAN TIMES in a telephone interview Friday.

Official on Deployment of Palestinian Policemen

NC0204205094 Paris AFP in English 2020 GMT
2 Apr 94

[Text] Jerusalem, April 2 (AFP)—A first group of around 1,500 Palestinian policemen will be deployed on Thursday [7 April] in Gaza and Jericho where self-rule is to be launched, the PLO said here Saturday.

The office of Faysal al-Husayni, the PLO mainstream group Fatah's chief in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, said three battalions of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) would "start their mission immediately" on arrival.

One thousand former PLA fighters drafted in the police force will arrive in the Gaza Strip through the Rafah border post with Egypt. The other 500 will arrive in the West Bank town of Jericho over the Allenby bridge from Jordan.

The office added that a first group of Palestinian exiles would start to return on Tuesday, signaling "the start of the return of all the Palestinians expelled since 1967," when Israel seized the territories.

Israel and the PLO are close to agreeing on the deployment of up to 10,000 Palestinian policemen in Gaza and Jericho, chief PLO negotiator Nabil Sha'th said Saturday.

"An accord on the number of policemen should be concluded during meetings of the PLO and Israeli security committee" which begin in Cairo on Sunday, Sha'th said in the Egyptian capital.

The talks would also focus on "preparations for the deployment" of the police and security arrangements for Jericho and Gaza.

"I don't think there is currently a problem on the number of policemen, which will be around 10,000," Sha'th said.

Under a security accord signed in Cairo on Thursday, Israel and the PLO agreed that 160 foreign observers would be deployed in the mosque massacre town of Hebron and a first contingent of Palestinian police would be sent this week.

Envoy Voices Appreciation for Jordan's Support

JN0304084694 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Palestinian Ambassador in Amman al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim has voiced appreciation for the Jordanian Government's position under Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali in support of the PLO as well as the Government's policy aimed to protect the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and establish a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

In a statement to the Jordanian news agency commenting on the remarks made by Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for cabinet affairs and information minister, on the recent agreement reached in Cairo, 'Abd-al-Rahim said the Jordanian Government's call for Palestinian national unity and its support for the PLO, which is on the threshold of a new phase, emanate from a genuine pan-Arab position and show sound political foresight.

He added that the PLO is very eager to coordinate with Jordan now and in the future in view of the common interests and the one future for both fraternal peoples. He said: Jordan, under His Majesty King Husayn and his wise government, is maintaining a pan-Arab position. We believe this position should be championed because it supports the Palestinian people's struggle to establish an independent entity on their national soil, he added.

Spokesman Anticipates Return of 50 Expellees

JN0204102394 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 2 Apr 94 p 3

[Text] At least 50 Palestinians expelled by Israel for intifada-related activities will be allowed to return home this week, a Palestinian spokesman said Friday [1 April]. Many of over 2,000 Palestinians expelled for political reasons since 1967 were tipped to return in May 1993 when Israel allowed a token 30 to return, but refused to allow those who had been expelled for intifada-related activities go home.

"The names should be agreed upon by Sunday if all goes well," a PLO official in Amman told the JORDAN TIMES on Friday. Tunis-based spokesman Marwan Kanafani confirmed that "there are plans for the return of deportees this week," but refused to give further details.

Former student union president of Bir Zayt University Marwan Barghouti, Palestine Peoples Party executive committee member Taysir 'Aruri and 'Ayshah 'Awdah, a prominent political party activist, are expected to be among the first batch of expellees allowed to return. Some PLO officials had tipped that a return may be possible as early Monday or Tuesday.

Al-Natshah Appointed Mayor of Hebron

TA0304151694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Mustafa al-Natshah began discharging his duties as mayor of Hebron this afternoon, after the Civil Administration informed him that he had been appointed to the job at 'Arafat's request and that his fellow city councilmen would be returning to the positions from which they were fired eight years ago.

Civil Administration officials gave al-Natshah and his colleagues a report about the municipality's financial situation and other documents. Al-Natshah then went to the municipality offices and began discharging his

duties. He told our correspondent Moti Amir that he had asked the Civil Administration to remove the curfew and the closure on Hebron in order to ease the lot of the population, and that the Israeli officials had promised him they would look into the matter.

The outgoing mayor, who had been appointed by the Civil Administration and discharged his job until this morning, was asked to vacate his office and hand it over to al-Natshah.

Views Observer Deployment, Settlements

NC0304083094 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Telephone interview of Hebron Mayor Mustafa al-Natshah, in Hebron, by radio correspondent Muhammad al-Aswad, in Cairo, date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Aswad] Mr. al-Natshah, we welcome you to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Natshah] Thank you.

[Al-Aswad] After the PLO and Israel reached agreement on security arrangements in the Hebron area, President Yasir 'Arafat appointed you mayor of Hebron. In your opinion, what is the significance of this step? Can it be seen as the beginning of actual Palestinian authority and decisionmaking in the occupied territories?

[Al-Natshah] We welcome this decision and regard it as a step toward legality and democracy. My return and the return of the elected Municipal Council to our duties at Hebron Municipality strengthen legality and democracy. The Municipal Council is actually the elected body that was dismissed in 1983. Now, thanks to PLO efforts, it can again carry out its tasks.

[Al-Aswad] Your appointment followed the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre in Hebron. What is the mayor's role in providing protection for the Palestinians? Is this part of the mayor's authority?

[Al-Natshah] Conditions in the city since the massacre are unprecedented. The city center is closed off because of the security measures imposed by the Israeli authorities to protect the settlers. We have 750 shops that are closed. People living in the downtown area need permits to reach their homes. The schools in that area are closed because of the security cordon. Generally the city is paralyzed. Therefore the Municipal Council's first task is to reopen the city and restore normal life. We hope to do this within a few days, God willing. Second, the citizens have suffered a lot from assaults by the settlers and the Israeli Army. We hope that the international forces will protect the citizens and end the assaults.

[Al-Aswad] Mr. al-Natshah, as you know, there is an agreement to deploy Palestinian police and international observers in Hebron. How do the Palestinians in Hebron

view this step? What is the general atmosphere like in view of these recent developments?

[Al-Natshah] The agreement provides for the deployment of international observers, meaning international protection, but not Palestinian police. We welcome the international protection; it has been a Palestinian demand for years. This is the first time we are being given international protection. We regard it as part of the implementation of the relevant UN resolutions—in this case, Security Council Resolution 904. We hope this is a prelude to the implementation of the remaining UN resolutions. We stress that an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure. Evacuating 30 settler families from inside Hebron would be the most important move to protect the city's Arab citizens.

[Al-Aswad] The Palestinian-Israeli negotiations will resume in Cairo today to discuss ways of implementing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles on transitional Palestinian autonomy, beginning with Gaza and Jericho. According to some reports, the Israeli withdrawal from these two areas will begin on 12 April. What is your assessment of this step, judging from your perspective as a resident in the occupied territories?

[Al-Natshah] We want peace in the region. We want a withdrawal from the rest of the West Bank. We want it to be a genuine, total withdrawal. We want the settlements issue to be put at the top the agenda so that the settlers will also be evacuated.

[Al-Aswad] Mr. al-Natshah, how do the Palestinians in the territories regard the Egyptian role in making peace and restoring the Palestinian people's legitimate rights?

[Al-Natshah] We greatly appreciate the stance of Egypt and Mubarak and their backing for the Palestinian cause. We hope this backing will continue until the Palestinian people can exercise self-determination and establish a state on their national soil.

[Al-Aswad] Mr. Mayor, we thank you very much. You are always welcome on the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Natshah] Thank you.

Islamic Jihad Threatens To Kill Foreign Observers

TA0204044494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] The Islamic Jihad fundamentalist organization yesterday threatened to kill the international observers. A statement issued in Hebron warned the Government of Norway against sending its forces. It also warned Palestinians against joining the police force expected to deploy in Gaza and Jericho next week.

DFLP Claims Responsibility for Killing Israeli Officer

JN0104163894 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] has claimed responsibility for assassinating an Israeli near Tel Aviv and said the slain man is an officer in the Israeli Army. The DFLP said that a group of its Red Star Battalions, the DFLP striking arm in the occupied territories, carried out the death sentence against officer Yosi Zandani.

Fatah Hawks Urge Halt to Talks With Israel

TA0404071494 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 1 Apr 94 p 3

[By 'Imad al-Afranji]

[Text] Gaza—The Fatah Hawks, Fatah's military apparatus, have called on the Palestinian leadership to stop the negotiations in protest of Israeli practices in the occupied territories. They urged the leadership not to resume the talks until acts of pursuit and liquidation against all wanted men from all factions are halted.

The Fatah Hawks called on the movement's organizational authority in the Gaza Strip to immediately freeze all channels of contact with the Israeli administration.

The statement said that this has no connection with the peace process, that what is taking place at the negotiating table is being done according to the laws of negotiations and what is taking place on the ground in the occupied territories is governed by the laws of the occupied territories, and that there was no contradiction between the two.

The statement was issued in the wake of the killing of six Fatah activists last Monday by special Israeli units.

Tehran Radio Reports Tension Between Hamas, Fatah

LD0404073594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0130 GMT 4 Apr 94

[Text] Palestinian sources yesterday announced that Fatah and the Islamic Resistance Movement, HAMAS, have each kidnapped an active member of the other group. According to these sources, HAMAS, which opposes the trend of compromise by the PLO with the Zionist regime, kidnapped Kamal 'Abd-al-Majid in the Gaza Strip. The Fatah faction, in turn, kidnapped Khalid Hindi.

Soldier Wounded; Hamas Kidnaps Fatah Official

TA0304064294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500
GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier was lightly wounded a short while ago when shots were fired from a passing car at IDF headquarters in Gaza city.

A senior Fatah official was kidnapped by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists in Gaza city over the weekend. Hamas claims that the man was collaborating with the Israeli authorities. Palestinian sources told our correspondent Moti Amir that the real reason behind the kidnapping was a dispute over land in Rafah. In the course of the kidnapping a violent fight broke out; one Hamas activist was killed and 30 were injured. The sources stressed that because of the continuing clashes with Hamas, Fatah was making efforts to capture influential positions and seize control of land and installations before Hamas does.

Our army affairs correspondent has learned that two wanted Hamas activists turned themselves in to the IDF over the past few weeks. IDF commanders in the Gaza Strip are continuing to hold contacts and meetings with Hamas members in an effort to persuade them to halt terrorist activity. Military sources said that the Hamas activists have a great deal of motivation to carry out terrorist attacks and they are expected to increase their efforts over the next few days.

PLO Employee 'Assassinated' in Tunis

NC0204102894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1015 GMT
2 Apr 94

[Text] Tunis, 2 Par (MENA)—Last night, unknown assailants assassinated Khalil Abu-Mu'ayliq, an employee of the PLO Political Department, in the Tunisian capital's al-Manzah quarter. The culprits, who remain unidentified, escaped.

Algeria

Four Political Parties Hold Meeting on Dialogue

LD0304125094 *Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic*
1200 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] The national radio has learned that four political parties—the National Liberation Front [FLN], the Islamic Society Movement [HAMAS], the Islamic Nahda [Movement] Party, and the Movement for Democracy in Algeria—are meeting today to coordinate their stances regarding the dialogue resumed by President Lamine Zeroual, with political parties, national figures, and social and economic organizations, especially after the presidency official spokesman's meeting with the national press.

Special Court Issues 13 Death Sentences

LD0304195794 *Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic* 1900 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Fourteen persons, two of whom are at large, accused of attempting to assassinate a police officer, attempting to assassinate a citizen in Oran, and of carrying out numerous robberies, were tried yesterday in Oran. The Public Prosecutor asked for three death penalties.

The special court in Algiers yesterday issued 13 death sentences against members of armed groups. Ten of the sentences were in absentia. The charges against them were: Belonging to armed groups, premeditated murder, and violating state security.

A statement by the security services reported that the security forces have eliminated six terrorists in the center and east of Algeria in Batna, Boumerdes, Blida, and Jijel.

FIS Warns Country Slipping Toward Civil War

LD0104150394 *Tehran IRNA in English* 1435 GMT
1 Apr 94

[Text] Athens, April 1, IRNA—The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) said the military-backed regime in Algeria has intensified its terror campaign against the people and warned that the country is slipping towards a civil war.

A FIS statement, faxed to IRNA from Germany Friday, referred to the recent announcement by Algerian authorities to form armed militias to fight Islamic groups and said the regime "is now taking refuge in widespread terrorist and illegal acts."

The statement noted that youth between 14 to 25 years of age were being killed and their bodies thrown on the streets "in order to create fear among the people so that they may accept the rule of the minority."

257 civilians were murdered by the regime only in three Algerian cities in the last few days, said FIS, also blaming the regime for attacks against women.

"Our sister believers should know that all calls for attacks against women stem from this deviated group which is thirsty for the blood of the innocent men and women," said the statement in Arabic.

Unidentified gunmen shot and killed two schoolgirls near Algiers Tuesday. FIS said the aim of the attacks "is to lead the country into a civil war as soon as possible," and called on all Algerians regardless of their views and positions to make a united stand and foil the plots of the "enemies of Islam both inside and outside Algeria."

The Algerian regime cancelled elections, banned FIS and imprisoned its leaders after its sweeping victory in general elections in the country two years ago.

FIS and other Islamic groups, which enjoy popular support, are struggling to create an Islamic state in Algeria.

FIS Representative Accuses Government of Killing Civilians

LD0104190894 *Paris Radio France International in French* 1830 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] The Islamic Salvation Front has accused the government of having killed more than 200 civilians throughout the country in the last few days. The FIS representative in Europe, Rabah Kebir, said the authorities are organizing large scale terrorist operations. He has asked international human rights organizations to react in order to stop these operations.

Security Services Kill 13 'Terrorists' in Boudouaou

LD0104130494 *Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic* 1145 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] Acting on the basis of information provided by citizens, the security services yesterday attacked a place called El Haouch El Mekhfi in the Boudouaou area. They killed 13 terrorists and recovered three [word indistinct] machine-guns, four hunting rifles, three automatic pistols, and radio sets.

During this attack, a member of the security services were killed.

Other Arrests Noted

LD0204201894 *Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic* 1900 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] In a statement by the security authorities it was announced today that the security forces had liquidated 37 terrorists between Wednesday and Friday, and arrested another 62 between Monday and Thursday in different areas of the nation. The security authorities also announced that a mujahid had been assassinated in the village of Ergen in Jijel Province. A terrorist group had also set fire to Souk El Fellah in the agricultural village of Bouchahhar in Tipaza Province.

The security authorities statement adds that another terrorist group in Tipaza dug up and wrecked the Sidi Abdelkader cemetery. Armed men also stormed an elementary school in the municipality of Babour, Setif Province, and tore up the national flag.

Libya

Al-Humaydi on Readiness for Direct Dialogue With West

LD0204214794 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Brother leader Major al-Khuwayldi al-Humaydi delivered a speech at the opening of the sixth council session of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU]. [passage omitted] In his address, Major al-Khuwayldi al-Humaydi warned against the dangers posed by challenges confronting the Arab nation, indicating that they formed an obstacle toward achieving any Arab integration, prosperity and progress. [passage omitted]

He added that one of the most prominent challenges facing us and which the enemies are using to impede our unity and to destroy our basic principles with deep-rooted crusade-like rancor is the crisis fabricated more than two years ago by Western states against the Great Jamahiriya. The Western states insist on continuing to use the so-called Security Council to issue unjust mandatory resolutions which all the world—people and agencies—have rejected.

Major al-Khuwayldi al-Humaydi said that the repeated threat by the three Western states and their indifference to all initiatives to find a peaceful solution to the crisis required collective confrontation in line with the requirements of our charters and pacts to prevent those countries from carrying on implementing the same method they have been following, and to work on lifting the unjust mandatory sanctions imposed on your brothers in the Great Jamahiriya, which have resulted in large physical and material losses that have spread to the AMU. [passage omitted]

Major al-Khuwayldi al-Humaydi said: We announce from this podium, full self-confidence, that we are ready to hold direct dialogue with Western states, on equal footing, without there being room for any terrorism or encroachment. We also announce that we are prepared to receive their judges, with grace and honor, in line with recognized international rules.

Al-Khuwayldi al-Humaydi added: Your brothers in the Jamahiriya expect a decisive solution and practical steps to lift injustice from them to emerge from this summit. Any position which contradicts that will make Libyans feel the futility of this union as being one political entity and will leave them with a feeling of deep disappointment. [passage omitted]

Foreign Committee Secretary Arrives in Beijing

LD2903175194 Tripoli JANA in English 1709 GMT 29 Mar 94

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Rabia'a [March] 29, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The secretary of the General Peoples Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation arrived in Beijing yesterday on a visit to the Peoples Republic of China where he will have contacts and consultations on the bolstering of the special relations and co-operation which exist between the Great Jamahiriya and the Peoples Republic of China in all areas.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry yesterday held a dinner banquet in honour of the secretary and his accompanying delegation which was attended by the heads of Arab diplomatic legations based in Beijing as well as the secretary and members of the Libyan Arab peoples bureau in Beijing.

Libyan Arab-Chadian Talks Resume

LD0204093894 Tripoli JANA in English 0841 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Tripoli, al-Tayr [April] 2, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The Libyan Arab-Chadian talks for consolidating and developing bilateral relations between the two countries resumed last night.

The session resumed the discussion and consideration of the items on the agenda of the talks.

JANA Editor Assails U.S. 'Colonial Viewpoint'

LD0304184594 Tripoli JANA in English 1801 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Tripoli, al Tayr [April] 3, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The American radio broadcast a commentary quoting the American chief of staff who represents the American Administration's viewpoint. The commentary referred to remarks by the American President.

JANA's editor for international affairs commented on this saying that "opinion and remarks expressed in this commentary reflect the colonial viewpoint of the USA towards other peoples especially peoples who are endeavouring to build and assert themselves and take their decisions freely. This is a narrow-minded viewpoint leading the USA to mock international law and consider independent states as if they were her colonies or companies which she controls their resources. When American officials talk about changing other regimes, they should not forget that the American regime is the one which deserves to be change for it is founded on injustice, exploitation, persecution of minorities including [words indistinct], racial discrimination and aggression.

The remarks made by American officials against China, the Great Jamahiriya, India, North Korea, Iran and Cuba and other peoples who are genuinely independent

contain a scent of aggression. The peoples against whom America declared her hostility and uncovered her plans towards them, should get ready in anticipation of the aggression which the American radio remarks said it was being planned.

America [words indistinct] from the political stances she has been following that she is against all values and principles of freedom. She endeavours to distort civilisation and fuel wars. America commits daily tens of inhuman crimes against mankind civilisation. She threatens international peace. The peoples of the world continue to remember the crimes of America in Vietnam, Korea, Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, her strategic alliance with the Israelis against the Arabs, her instigation of conflicts in South America, her support for dictatorial regimes in South America, her promotion of drugs in the world and her acts of political assassination like that against the late president of Chile Salvador Allende.

All free peoples and active forces are required today to see the true nature of America who uses a colossal arsenal for the realisation of her designs and exerting pressure on other peoples through intimidation, terrorism and bribery so as to abandon humanitarian values and surrender to American domination.

Sudan

Al-Bashir, U.S. Envoy Meet; Foreign Minister Comments

EA0104191294 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] The president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, yesterday evening at the republican palace, met Mrs. Madeleine Albright, the United States permanent ambassador to the United Nations, who arrived in the country yesterday afternoon on a brief visit.

In a statement issued after the meeting, the U.S. envoy stressed that her discussions with Lt. Gen. al-Bashir were serious, open, and clear, and that the dialogue was very important.

For his part, Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih, who attended the meeting, expressed Sudan's satisfaction with the visit by the U.S. envoy, which is considered the real beginning of a serious dialogue between Sudan and America. He pointed out that dialogue was a course which had been followed, and had been called for, by the revolution from the outset. He said: We believe that we have entered preliminary negotiations, and that the revolution is working for peace. We call upon all sides to work for a just and lasting peace.

More on Al-Bashir Talks With U.S. Envoy

EA0104204094 Omdurman National Unity Radio in English 1500 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] The permanent representative of the United States at the United Nations, Mrs. Madeleine Albright, arrived Thursday [31 March] evening on a few hours' visit and handed over a written message from the U.S. President Bill Clinton to President al-Bashir, dealing with issues of mutual concern.

The U.S. official has held talks with General al-Bashir at the Republican Palace following her arrival. These talks tackled the progress of bilateral relations and issues of mutual concern. In a press statement following her meeting with President al-Bashir, she said that Sudan and the United States should work together for pushing forward the peace process, human rights, and what she described as Sudan's support to terrorism. She said that her dialogue with General al-Bashir was very serious and frank, saying that the continuation of the IGADD [Intergovernmental Agency on Drought and Development] peace initiative is necessary for achieving a lasting peace in Sudan.

The foreign minister, Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih, described the visit of Mrs. Albright to Sudan as a real beginning of the serious dialogue between Sudan and the United States. He affirmed that the dialogue has been one of the basic methods which had been adopted by the revolution adding that the visit of Mrs. Albright came in the framework of the serious dialogue between the two countries. The minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih stressed that the Sudan gives top priority to the issues of realizing a just and permanent peace. He warned her that any (?work) for supporting the outlaws with arms and attempts to abort the peace talks. Will negatively affect the peace process in Sudan. Dr. Abu-Salih has welcomed contribution of the American Government to the peace endeavors in Sudan, providing that this contribution was serious and honest.

He described as lacking evidence, the accusation made by the American Government on Sudan's violation of human rights and support to terrorism. He affirmed Sudan's serious desire to continue dialogue with the U.S.

Following her meeting with President al-Bashir which lasted for two hours, Mrs. Albright left Khartoum. She was received and seen off at the airport by the Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih, the state minister for foreign affairs, Bishop Rorech, along with the U.S. ambassador to Sudan Donald Petterson.

Government Responds to Remarks of U.S. Envoy

EA0204160094 Khartoum SUNA in English 1640 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] Khartoum, 1 April (SUNA)—Sudan Government Thursday [31 March] issued a statement on the occasion

of the visit to Sudan by Mrs. Madeleine Albright, permanent representative of the USA at the United Nations. Here is the statement full text:

Sudan's Stance Towards Various Issues

The government of the Revolution of National Salvation is fully aware of the fact that most of the problems that face the Sudan at the internal level and at the level of its relations with the other countries, including the United States, are tightly connected with the problem of the war in southern Sudan, therefore, the government has always been looking for the attainment of a peaceful solution to the problem in itself as well as for the treatment of the complications that the war has caused.

This has been clearly reflected in the efforts exerted by the government in order to restore peace and to provide relief for those affected by the war. On the other hand, the problem of the war in the south is connected to varying degree with other problems encountered by the Sudan such as human rights, the quest for an equitable division of wealth and power and the creation of social and economic development.

Since its advent the Revolution of National Salvation has put the quest for a peaceful solution to the conflict in southern Sudan at the top of its priorities. It took the initiative by sending a message to Colonel John Garang calling him for the table of negotiations, but he refused to receive that message, which was received instead by the former Ethiopian President Mengistu.

The government also took the initiative by declaring a unilateral cease-fire which induced the rebels to capture Kurmuk Town, but the government had nevertheless committed itself to the transportation of relief products to the needy in the operation areas, including those controlled by the rebels.

Two months after the advent of the revolution, in August 1989, a government delegation met with rebels delegation in Addis Ababa and the two sides agreed upon the necessity of the continuation of the negotiations in order to attain peace.

During September and October 1989 a national conference on peace issues convened in Khartoum and tackled problems such as;

- (1) Power sharing
- (2) Distribution of wealth
- (3) Religion and politics
- (4) Unity in diversity

During the period from 28th November to 5th December, the second round of negotiations between the government and the rebels was held in Nairobi, sponsored by former U.S. President Mr. Jimmy Carter. In effect, the government's agenda during this round and during all the subsequent talks were the resolutions of the national conference on peace issues.

In 1991 the rebel movement was split into two factions. However, the government had not given up hope in contacting both of them. During May, June, 1992, and in response to the mediation of the Nigerian Government, another first round of negotiation was held in Abuja between the government and the two factions, and the agenda had been agreed upon for the future talks, but John Garang declared in Kampala during a press conference that he would not recognize the Abuja resolutions because the head of his delegation surpassed the powers delegated to him.

The second round convened in Abuja in May 1993, and this time the concerned sides had agreed upon most of the raised points but the coming of John Garang at the end of the talks impeded the success of the round by causing a disagreement over the issue of residual powers. However, another round of talks between the government and the United Faction was held in Nairobi and resumed in Fashoda (Sudan) in August 1993.

During the summit meeting of IGADD (6th to 8th September 1993), the presidents of Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda, expressed their desire to mediate in order to put an end to the war in southern Sudan. A meeting between the two sides of the conflict was thus held in Nairobi, 17th March 1994, but the talks have been postponed, to be resumed in the same venue on 16th May 1994.

This long war which is imposed upon us in the southern part of the country has created a humanitarian problem. This problem is manifest in the great numbers of displaced persons who sought refuge in safer areas inside or outside of the Sudan. The government has therefore committed itself to displaced people until peace is restored and they go back to their areas.

In fact, the government has done its utmost in order to provide relief for its needy citizens and at the same time it welcomed the support of the international community in this respect. The government has signed a number of agreements, some of which represent a breakthrough in the field of providing relief to those affected by war, even for those who live in the areas held by the rebels. The agreements include:

- (1) The general agreement with the International Commission of the Red Cross signed in 1984.
- (2) Operation Lifeline Sudan signed with the U.N. in 1989.
- (3) Operation Lifeline signed with U.N. in 1991.
- (4) The detailed agreement with the ICRC in 1992.
- (5) Operation Lifeline signed with the U.N. in 1993.
- (6) The Nairobi Agreement with the rebel factions on the facilitation of the flow of relief March 1994.

In spite of the fact that the rebel movement has exploited these agreements to serve other ends, and in spite of the fact that certain organizations have acted in such manners that ignore the Sudanese sovereignty, the government showed a lot of patience and cooperation in consideration to the miserable situation of its citizens.

However, the major handicap that faces us at the present is the lack of the means of transportation that secure the arrival of the relief materials to the needy in due time.

And hence, the government is ready for full cooperation with the international community represented by the U.N. and donor countries for the import of the necessary equipment for the transportation of relief products as well as for the cooperation in the field of the supervision of relief operations.

Democracy and Political System

The concept of democracy in Sudan entails the exercise of people of their legitimate rights in governing themselves and choosing the political system that conforms with their social background, cultural heritage and economic prosperity.

(?As to) the question of democracy (?on) the agenda of (?Sudan)- American relations, it is imperative to agree on the content rather than the form which is governed by the changing factors of specific community.

Sudan has adopted a political system that conforms with its orientation, having in mind repeated failures of applying Western democracy since independence, in 1956. Although the political system is still in its preliminary stages, the active participation of people in popular committees' elections gave it the needed drive. Necessary steps are being taken to complete the system by introducing free and direct elections at all levels, from popular committee to the National Assembly. The political system tends also to elect the president and vice president directly. The federal system will help also to widen the base for political participation.

Economic Reform

Sudan's Government has exerted great efforts regarding privatization of the Sudanese economy to an extent that exceeded what is usually recommended by the IMF. It applied a tough policy of self-reliance and market economy which resulted in economic hardship.

Unfortunately, the IMF has ignored its adviser's technical view, which praised Sudan for achieving an annual economic growth of 11.5 percent. The IMF response to American (?pressure) has denied Sudan any financial assistance. The IMF has lost its technical credibility and began to treat economic issues which are influenced by double standards.

Terrorism

Sudan has renewed its condemnation of international terrorism. It also requested those accusing Sudan of terrorism to furnish evidence to that effect.

It is needless to say that Sudan does not harbour terrorists or training camps and the government has repeatedly declared that Sudan is an open country for those who want to see for themselves.

Sudan also is not threatening the stability of other countries. To the contrary, Sudan is threatened by some neighbouring countries that provide rebels and opposition groups with logistics, camps and access to media. Efforts were made to refute these allegations about terrorism. Dialogue was started with the American ambassador in Khartoum and a letter was sent by the foreign minister to his American counterpart, suggesting exchange of information about the subject. Instead of a positive response, the United States include Sudan in its list of countries sponsoring international terrorism.

A statement by ex-President Jimmy Carter and a testimony by an official of the State Department, at hearing in the congress on last March 1994, prove beyond doubt that the American decision was baseless.

Human Rights

Respect of human rights in Sudan is a matter of principle and the government is very eager to preserve these rights in accordance with its principles. Sudan welcomed the special rapporteur, Mr. Gaspar Biro, and accorded him all assistance possible to carry out his job. However, the report of the special rapporteur was full of misinformation and disrespect to the beliefs of the Sudanese people. Nevertheless, the U.S. Government delegation to the 50th session of the human rights committee decided to support the biased report and spearhead the attack on Sudan.

We believe that the noble cause of human rights is being exploited politically and double standards were applied to ridicule the beliefs of Muslims, as did the report by the special rapporteur. This is a serious matter.

Such irresponsible behavior defeats the real objectives behind the international instruments on human rights that call for the respect of different cultures and religious beliefs.

Grievances of the Sudanese Government Against the USA Policy

The Sudanese Government has its own grievances against the policy of the U.S.A. vis-a-vis the Sudan. It is a policy characterized by permanent hostility, escalation of contention and arbitrary.

(1) The American administration based itself in its hostile position against the government of the Sudan on Congress Resolution No. 513, despite the selectivity and double standards practised by the American administration in applying this resolution. The administration did not take into account the legacy inherited by the NSR government such as an imposed war, refugees, displaced persons, drought and instability that hindered development, endangered unity and security of the country and posed a threat to neighbours.

(2) The United States adopted a number of resolutions against the Sudan without any objective reasons, an act that deepened misunderstanding between the two governments, e.g.;

(3) Congress Resolution No. H.R. 2295 (June 1993), H.R. 2332, (June 1993-1994), (March 1993) and 131 (November, 1993). [paragraph as received]

(4) Hostile positions of the American Administration by preparing draft resolutions against the Sudan and lobbying for their adoption. Such positions were flagrant at U.N. General Assembly during 47th, 48th sessions, especially on human rights issue.

(5) Hostile American positions against the Sudan within the Human Rights Commission sessions 48,49,50. The question of appointing the independent expert, the appointment of the special rapporteur, transition of Sudan from the confidential hearing to the public hearing phase and, finally, the adoption of the report of the rapporteur which contained insults against Islam, the creed of the nation.

(6) Adaption by the American administration of the rebels' version at different international forums and different occasions, as proved.

- The Washington Colloquium, organized under the auspices of Mr. Johnson, chairman of the Special Committee on Africa.

- Hostility to the Islamic orientation of the Sudan and its cultural option.

- The hostile position of the American Administration against Sudan at the IMF, an act that led to forcing the Sudan to quit the IMF.

- The American Administration consistently stood against the Sudan in other international financial institutions.

- Inscription of the Sudan on the list of countries that sponsor international terrorism, without the least proof by the American administration.

- Anti-Sudanese declarations by USA officials in every international forum, subjectively and without any proof whatever.

- Despite the American humanitarian assistance, a gesture appreciated in itself, yet this assistance is limited and does not cover liberated zones and falls short of involving infrastructure for relief operations.

Conclusion

Despite the grievances mentioned above and the damage suffered by the Sudan due to the American hostile policy, we do believe that there is no objective reason for this hostility. We are confident that the wrong information leaked to the American Administration, which caused the misunderstanding that prevail over the relations between the two countries, can be corrected through

serious, frank, and active dialogue. The Government of Sudan stands ready for such dialogue and that it shall contribute, it is the conviction that dialogue is the confidence between the two countries and strengthen the ties of friendship between the two governments.

Foreign Minister Comments

EA0204211094 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1720 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 2 April (SUNA)—Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih made a press statement today regarding the statement by Madeleine Albright, a U.S. envoy, on Sudan. The U.S. statement was issued in Addis Ababa on 1 April.

The foreign minister said that Sudan, on the basis of its overall national strategy, had striven to establish some kind of normal and warm relations with the United States through dialogue, a system adopted by the revolution. Dr. Abu-Salih said that the Sudanese Government had sent numerous letters concerning dialogue between Sudan and the United States, and had addressed correspondence to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. There were talks in November 1992, and in August 1993. He said that the U.S. Government had, without any preliminaries, placed Sudan on the list of states which fostered terrorism—without any evidence.

His excellency made it clear that Sudan had earlier, four months before the declaration, received notification that it had been placed on the list of states under supervision, but not as a state fostering terrorism.

The foreign minister stated that Sudan had welcomed Madeleine Albright's visit to confirm the revolution's intention to attain good relations. He pointed out that the president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, held a 70-minute meeting with Mrs. Albright, the U.S. envoy. It was a responsible and frank dialogue and a start to serious dialogue. Dr. Abu-Salih added: We do not know the reasons for Albright's statement in Addis Ababa, or why it was not made in Khartoum.

His excellency denied what was said in Albright's statement in Addis Ababa. He said that what she said about the issue of peace in Sudan confirmed what was known by the government and people of Sudan: That the war had been imposed on them, as well as the fact that Sudan was striving in all seriousness with the goal of reaching peace to stop everything that fanned the war. He said that Sudan wanted peace. Moreover, Sudan had communicated to the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development [IGADD] states its adherence to their initiative, and to making it a successful initiative.

Dr. Abu-Salih said that the IGADD states should know that there were obstructions to the peace process from certain quarters, which back the rebels with weapons, ammunition, and money, and which want the fragmentation of Sudan and the promotion of war.

With regard to Albright's comment that Sudan was obstructing relief operations, Dr. Abu-Salih said that her comment in this regard was strange, pointing out that Sudan had concluded many agreements with many quarters, including the Operation Lifeline, which was considered a model for providing relief supplies. He said that Sudan was satisfied with the commendation it received from the third committee three months ago. That committee had praised Sudan's role in conveying food to the famine victims and the needy.

As to Albright's remarks about terrorism, Dr. Abu-Salih said: We ask the U.S. Administration to provide evidence for these accusations and to remove the name of Sudan from the list of countries fostering terrorism. [passage omitted]

As to what Albright said about Sudan's violation of human rights, Abu-Salih said: We in Sudan believe in human rights on the basis of the tenets of our religion, and we do not need directions from anyone on good conduct. The U.S. Administration should present its authority on this. He said that Sudan had records of human rights violations in a number of states, including Israel and the United States, and was ready to provide evidence concerning this.

Official Comments on 'Strain' in U.S. Ties

EA0304185094 Khartoum SUNA in French 1615 GMT
3 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Khartoum 3 April (SUNA)—The chairman of the External Relations Committee of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) Professor Muhammad Shakir al-Saraj has attributed the strain in Sudanese-U.S. relations to Sudan's Islamic orientation under the National Salvation Revolution.

In an interview with the Iranian news agency's correspondent in Khartoum on Sunday [3 April], Professor Saraj said the media, parliamentary, and political circles were responsible for America's hostility towards Sudan. He said the United States had never been concerned with the restoration of peace in southern Sudan, and that it used the rebels in the south as a pretext to put pressure on the Sudanese Government. [passage omitted]

He emphasized that Sudan will not accept threats and will never give up its Islamic path, whatever the pressures.

He said the United States cannot internationalize the conflict in southern Sudan, as that would constitute a violation of Sudanese sovereignty. Sudan is ready to defend its independence and territorial integrity.

Commentary Assesses Visit of U.S. Envoy

EA0204190094 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio
Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: The National Salvation Revolution [NSR] believes in dialogue as a procedure

and method for finding solutions to numerous and thorny issues. That was evident from the broad consultative conferences which were held throughout the country, which produced truly Sudanese views on solutions to numerous complicated internal issues. On this same basis, the NSR is pursuing the same procedure and using the same method for dialogue to remove misunderstandings which might occur between Sudan and any other state. This is what Sudan has always called and striven for, that is: To place relations between ourselves and the United States in their correct framework on the basis of mutual respect and noninterference in the country's internal affairs. Colleague Najm al-Din Muhammad Ahmad wrote the following commentary on the visit to this country last Thursday [31 March] by Madeleine Albright, the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, which he will now read:

[Najm al-Din] The two-hour visit to the country by Ambassador Madeleine Albright, the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, during which she met Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, president of the Republic, was regarded in diplomatic and official circles as a true beginning to serious dialogue between our country and the United States. The United States has displayed flagrant hostility towards Sudan since the beginning of the National Salvation Revolution in 1989, without Sudan committing a sin or without issuing anything which in the least harmed these relations. For this reason, we know, just as the whole world does, that the United States itself, and not others, is the one and only country responsible for the state of estrangement and indeed hostility that has been a characteristic tarnishing relations between the two countries. Evidence, facts and the practices of that great power have demonstrated this, for that country is the one that started all this through an economic boycott, beginning in 1989, within the framework of a policy of pressure—which it always pursues towards states and peoples that strive to liberate their will and build themselves through self-reliance.

The superpower was not content with that. It led a feverish campaign in international forum when the weapon of economic pressure did not succeed. America has been drawing on this weapon against Sudan to make it bow or retreat, even an inch, from all the programs and plans which have crystallized through the numerous dialogue conferences in which the people of Sudan joined forces. The result was a comprehensive national strategic plan which laid down a cure for all the diseases and maladies of the state. Sudan began to implement this plan with every confidence and ability, in order to achieve the superstate of Sudan, which it sought with the help of God.

We say: When the weapon of economic pressure did not (?finish off) a free, noble people like the people of Sudan, the United States resorted to campaigns in which it looked for excuses to condemn Sudan and justify its direct interference in Sudan's internal affairs, exploiting that so-called international organization, the United Nations, in which it is represented by the visitor who

came to our country as a dear and honored guest. She was granted the honor of meeting the president of the Republic, who cleared up matters and removed every obscurity or ambiguity in her mind about issues and ambiguities. We hope she will be able to convey all the facts she heard, the documents she acquainted herself with and the information she was given on all her queries so as to thaw the thick ice in relations between Sudan and her country—or, that at least, we can count on this as being the beginning of the road leading to that. When the weapon of economic pressure failed, the United States, which since the collapse of the communist bloc has always brandished a stick at whoever disobeys or tries to disobey it, led a campaign in which it desperately attempted to distort Sudan's image in world opinion. This endeavor reached its climax when the great power threw the name of Sudan falsely onto the American list for terrorism, without citing any convincing proof to justify the allegation, labeling as terrorists people who profess a religion that discards violence and calls on people to embrace it amicably.

The United States has always been accustomed to attaching the label of terrorism to any honorable, proud, and free state, forgetting or pretending to forget that it, that is to say, the United States, in reality—according to evidence—sponsors terrorism and protects those who practice terrorism. It also assists those who terrify peaceful people and it spreads terror and a lack of tranquility among peoples. No two people disagree on U.S. support for organized international terrorism. Moreover, its support for terrorism in Sudan is represented by the direct moral support which it gives, just as it gave generously to the rebel movement through the Washington Symposium, and its sponsorship of the rebellion's assertion, which favors the separation of southern Sudan from the rest of the country.

U.S. support for terrorism in Sudan does not limit itself to moral support—it exceeds it to give material support and indirectly supply the rebel movement with the necessary equipment through its allies and pawns. In all this hostility and incitement, the United States proceeds from the bases of its flagrant hostility to Islam. While it does so, it takes into account the fact that Islam is the logical alternative to remolding the world on the basis of justice and equality, and absence of injustice after having suffered injustice and oppression under U.S. attempts at hegemony and domination.

This is naturally not the conviction of the Sudanese people alone but the conviction of all Muslim peoples in all parts of the world. We say this, but, at the same time, we welcome the dialogue between Sudan and the United

States, which we regard as having seriously begun with all openness and frankness. However, we only hope that the United States will continue its dialogue with us, while bearing in mind the principles of the Sudanese people, which we cannot abandon or deviate from. These principles are represented by Sudan's cultural orientations. The United States ought to know that Sudan's cultural option was not manufactured by the Sudanese Government, inasmuch as it is the option of the widespread national will.

This matter is not confined to the Sudanese people but it goes beyond them, becoming one of the concerns of the Islamic nation as a whole. Consequently, the United States is faced with an historic test and should show some readiness, however limited, to respect other peoples' options. It is now entering a dialogue with Sudan to rehabilitate its relations and eliminate misunderstandings, caused by the United States in the first instance—that is, if it so wishes. God grant us success.

Opposition Says Regime Harboring, Training 'Terrorists'

NC0104081194 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 28 Mar 94
p 4

[Report by Majdi Hilmi]

[Text] The Sudanese opposition National Democratic Grouping has affirmed that the Sudanese regime's policy is to divide Sudan and to foment disturbances among its sects and people.

In a memorandum sent to Arab foreign ministers, the grouping pointed out that the regime has obstructed the Constitution, dissolved parties and democratic unions, and launched ethnic war against the south. This, the grouping added, threatens Sudan's unity and invites foreign intervention. The grouping accused the regime of harboring and training terrorists in Sudan. It said that the regime is providing terrorists with weapons, funds, and passports. The grouping maintained that it has information that terrorists come from various Arab countries to training camps in Sudan.

In its memorandum, the Sudanese grouping urged the Arab League to intercede and stop the ongoing war in southern Sudan. The grouping also called for removing the regime and setting up a democratic authority that would respect the right of citizenship; separate religion from politics; recognize religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity; and recognize the independence of the judiciary and the legal profession. The grouping voiced its support for the unity of Sudan and its people.

GCC Ministerial Meeting Opens; Ministers Arrive

LD0204105794 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1003 GMT
2 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 2 Apr—Their excellencies the foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states arrived in Riyadh today to attend the 50th session of the GCC ministerial council, which will start at the Council's secretariat in Riyadh later today.

Their Excellencies Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, first deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs from Kuwait; Yusuf Bin- 'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs in Sultanate of Oman; Rashid Bin-'Abdallah al-Na'imi, minister of foreign affairs from the United Arab Emirates; Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabbur Al Thani, Qatari minister of foreign affairs, and Khalid Bin- 'Abdallah Al Khalifa, Bahraini minister of housing, have arrived. [passage omitted]

Prince Faysal Addresses Opening Session

LD0204211994 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television
Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] The fiftieth session of the GCC Ministerial Council began at the general-secretariat headquarters this afternoon. The meetings are chaired by His Royal Highness [HRH] Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, minister for foreign affairs and chairman of the current session. At the beginning of the meeting, HRH minister for foreign affairs made the following speech:

[Begin recording] [Faysal] In the name of God, the Compassionate and the Merciful, prayers and peace upon the prophets and messengers.

Your Highnesses and excellencies, secretary general, respected brothers, God's peace and blessings upon you. It gives me great pleasure to express to you the warmest of welcomes to your country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; which is today pleased to welcome you in the GCC Ministerial Council fiftieth session. With God's assistance, I pronounce this session open, and would like to praise the elements of cooperation and solidarity existing among our countries, as exemplified in the most effective resolutions adopted by our leaders during the sessions of the GCC summits. [passage omitted]

The field of bolstering military cooperation between the GCC states represented the most important issues discussed during the 14th summit. The higher council decided to set up a higher committee to implement resolutions pertaining to collective defense and military cooperation whose chairmanship will be assumed on an alternate basis by the GCC defense ministers. The committee will include the chiefs of staff and the chairman of the military committee of the GCC general-secretariat. The time has now come for the UAE to assume the chairmanship term.

Brothers, our meeting takes place at a time when our Gulf region is still witnessing difficult and critical situations. The Iraqi regime continues its policy of violating and selecting all UN Security Council resolutions regarding its aggression against Kuwait; and its breaking of the UN Security Council 773 and 833 Resolutions which stipulated a demarcation of land and sea borders between Iraq and Kuwait, its continuation to keep as hostages Kuwaiti prisoners and other nationals thus violating international laws and appropriate UNSC resolutions.

Also, Iran has again started to reiterate its claims of control and sovereignty over Greater and Lesser Tunb Islands and the island of Abu Musa, which belong to the UAE. However, we remain hopeful that Iran will respond to the voice of reason regarding the issue of the three islands and reach a final solution with the UAE through peaceful means; and in the process prove its sincere intention concerning its claims of good-neighborliness, development of friendly relations, and its desire for bilateral cooperation with GCC states. [end recording]

HRH the minister for foreign affairs added that the GCC fiftieth session is taking place at time which is at best not reassuring, because the Iraqi regime continues to pose a threat to the security and stability of our countries. There are also threats aimed at destroying our cooperation council which represented the solid rock that quashed Iraq's ambitions and thwarted its ugly aggression.

His highness went on to say that Iraq's latest efforts are represented in its large-scale campaign which it is conducting in the Arab arena, in an attempt to help lift the embargo imposed against it by the the UN Security Council resolution; and its attempt to re-establish relations without respecting and fully implementing these resolutions and recommendations.

His highness added that it is absolutely crucial for our current meeting to issue resolutions that stress and underline our determined and strong stance regarding this matter, to close the door in the face of any such attempts.

His highness said that our hearts continue to bleed profusely because of the ugly crime committed by the criminal Zionist settlers against defenceless and innocent worshippers in the sacred Ibrahimi mosque in Hebron; and its ensuing consequences and complications on the the peace process.

Stemming from this, his highness went on to say, we call on the international community to shoulder its responsibility regarding the provision of protection for the Palestinians and the sacred places from the savagery of the Jewish settlers in the occupied land.

Regarding Somalia, his highness said that we are still hopeful that the Somali leaders would be at the level of responsibility to implement what they had agreed upon

in Nairobi, Kenya, to save their country from the ravages of a civil war and the tragedy of a deadly famine.

His highness added that we also have not lost hope that the Afghan leaders would use the voice of reason and raise above their differences to spare Afghanistan from a total destruction.

We also hope that the international community would continue to implement its promises to stop the criminal Serbs from implementing their criminal ethnic plans against Muslim Bosnians. His highness expressed his hope that the Bosnian Muslims and Croats would be able to reap the fruits of their confederation plan to live together in security, stability, and peace; hoping that this plan would convince the Serbs to join the peace efforts and accept the solutions which are on the negotiating table.

In conclusion, his highness asked God to help them achieve success. Following this speech, the opening session was adjourned, and a meeting behind closed door was held.

Iraqi Intentions Noted

NC0204202694 Paris AFP in English 1931 GMT 2 Apr 94

[By Sulayman Nimr]

[Text] Riyadh, April 2 (AFP)—Saudi Arabia on Saturday urged its Gulf allies to toe the line against Baghdad and prevent it sowing division in the region, criticizing Qatar and Oman for their rapprochement with Iraq.

Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal said Iraq was "working to divide the GCC" and was "still a threat to security and stability in the region."

He urged the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to "restate the member nations' joint position on Iraq, to block any attempts" to drive a wedge between Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Bahrain and Qatar.

Observers said Prince al-Faysal, in his opening address to a two-day GCC foreign ministers meeting in Riyadh, was implicitly criticizing Baghdad's links with Oman and Qatar.

Oman was the only GCC country to maintain relations with Baghdad after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Qatar has also drawn closer to Iraq in the past few months, arousing deep concern in Kuwait, which was liberated by a US-led multinational coalition in February 1991.

In Cairo last weekend, the Omani and Qatari foreign ministers held talks with their Iraqi counterpart Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf on the sidelines of an Arab League ministerial meeting, officials said.

Al-Sahhaf described Iraq's relations with Oman, Qatar and Bahrain as "good" at the meeting, they added.

The GCC session was also expected to cover the Middle East peace talks, notably the multilateral track in which the Gulf is involved. Qatar and Oman are to host Israeli delegations for meetings of multilateral working groups.

Likewise on the agenda was Iran's territorial dispute with the UAE, the official Emirates news agency WAM said.

In Cairo, the 22-member Arab League reaffirmed support for the UAE in its dispute with Iran over three strategic islands in the southern Gulf.

The UAE has warned it could resort to international arbitration to resolve the dispute with Iran over the islands of Abu Musa, Tunb al-Kubra, and Tunb al-Sughra. Iran insists the problem must be tackled through direct dialogue.

The UAE and Iran had strong political and economic links until the dormant dispute flared anew in 1992 following accusations that Tehran had annexed the UAE part of Abu Musa and expelled some of its residents.

The GCC defence, political and economic alliance was created in May 1981 during the Iran-Iraq war.

Council Differences on Iraq Denied

LD0204215794 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1946 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 2 Apr—The Saudi foreign minister, Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, denied today that there are differences of opinion between the Gulf Cooperation Council states regarding the stance toward the Iraqi regime. He said: "We have not noticed the existence of differences regarding this matter whether on the level of the summit or the current level," in allusion to the foreign ministers meeting of the states of the council which started its work here today under his chairmanship. Prince Sa'ud spoke to journalists at the end of the second working session of the ministers here tonight. [passage omitted]

Other Agenda Topics Noted

LD0304005094 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2250 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 2 Apr—Their highnesses and excellencies, the foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council, ended their second ministerial council working session today under the chairmanship of the Saudi foreign minister, His Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal. [passage omitted]

His Highness said, "The nature of this meeting is to implement decisions reached during the summit meeting of their majesties and highnesses, the leaders of the Council's states. Accordingly, the decisions reached at the summit were reviewed during the meeting, be they security, economic, or political decisions."

His Highness said the meeting at the outset concentrated on the summit's decisions and ways of implementing them, and thus on political evaluations, political topics, GCC states' ties with their neighbors, and on the international effort that would be launched.

Asked about incongruity in the GCC's political stands, His Highness said, "That is what we hear in the press, but at the summit-level meetings or at those at the foreign ministers level, we have not noticed any incongruity between GCC states."

Responding to a question on Iraq's attempts to split the Arab front, Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal said, "I did not mention splits in my address. I said that Iraq was trying to come through with justifications, particularly humanitarian ones."

He added that Iraq wanted to reach its aims of not complying with the Security Council resolutions, particularly in its dispute with Kuwait on the demarcation of borders with Kuwait and on ending Iraq's claims on Kuwait. That effort had to be confronted and shown for what it was.

His Highness said, "We sympathize with the Iraqi people and their plight, but what is standing as an obstacle to improvement of the conditions of the Iraqi people is the Iraqi Government and not international resolutions."

He said that the international resolutions would solve the Iraqi people's tragedy. But Iraq was trying—through them—to get through to the Arab countries emotionally by telling them that the continuing sanctions were harming the Iraqi people. However, Iraq wanted to exploit this in order not to comply with the resolutions, which were of utmost importance for the Arab sphere, to Kuwaiti-Iraqi ties. If the basic condition was carried out, the whole picture toward Iraq would change, and Iraq would gain international support.

Session Ends; Statement Issued

LD0304204594 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1745 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Riyadh, 3 Apr—The Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] Ministerial Council ended its 50th session this afternoon at the Council's General Secretariat in Riyadh. It was chaired by His Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the Saudi foreign minister.

The Ministerial Council issued a press statement that was read out by GCC Secretary General Shaykh Fahim Bin-Sultan al-Qasimi. The following is the text of the press statement:

The Ministerial Council held its ordinary 50th session at the headquarters of the General Secretariat in Riyadh on 2nd and 3rd April, 1994. His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and head of the Ministerial Council's current session, chaired the meeting which was attended by all its members—His Excellency Rashid Bin-Abdallah

al-Na'imi, the foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates [UAE]; His Excellency Shaykh Khaled Bin-'Abdallah Al Khalifah, Bahrain's housing minister; His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabbur Al Thani, the foreign minister of the State of Qatar; and His Excellency Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir Al Sabah, first deputy prime minister and the foreign minister of the State of Kuwait.

The Ministerial Council studied the new regional developments and developments in the Gulf in the light of the Iraqi regime's lack of compliance with all international commitments imposed by Security Council resolutions related to its aggression, continuing procrastination, its pick-and-choose treatment of those resolutions, pursuit of a hostile policy toward the State of Kuwait, its continuing formation of a threat to GCC security and stability, and continuous attempts to split the cohesiveness of international legitimacy.

The council also studied the Iraqi nonimplementation of the UN Security Council resolutions related to Kuwait, its attempts to evade its international commitments concerning the Kuwaiti issue, its persistent repetition of expansionist claims on Kuwait, its claims against Kuwaiti sovereignty, its threats to Kuwaiti independence, and its cease-fire violations. In this context, the council recalled the GCC Supreme Council's emphasis, in its 14th session, that respecting the sovereignty and independence of Kuwait, as it came in the second paragraph of Resolution 687, and the international borders of Kuwait, as ratified by UN Security Council resolution No. 833, represent the essence of the commitments specified in Resolution No. 687, and that their nonimplementation represents a violation of the essence of that resolution.

As it welcomed the resolution adopted recently by the UN Security Council to continue the international sanctions against Iraq because of its nonimplementation of the UN Security Council resolutions related to its aggression against Kuwait, the GCC Council expresses its satisfaction with the understanding shown by the UN Security Council members of the aggressive policy of the Iraqi regime and their insistence on the necessity for Iraq to respect the sovereignty of Kuwait and sanctity of its territories. The council appeals to the international community to continue its pressures on the Iraqi regime in order to make it stop its aggressive behavior and to submit completely to all the UN Security Council resolutions related to Resolution No. 687, particularly those related to recognizing the international borders between the two countries, releasing the Kuwaiti and other prisoners of war and detainees, the payment of compensations, and a commitment not to commit or support any terrorist or sabotage action.

The council emphasizes its complete commitment to Iraqi unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and expresses its sympathy with the fraternal Iraqi people against the human suffering for which the Iraqi regime is fully responsible because of its refusal to implement the

UN Security Council Resolutions 706 and 712 that deal with the Iraqi needs of food and medicine.

The council also reviewed the new developments in the relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and reiterated its firm stance of supporting the UAE and its sovereignty on the three islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb. The council also reiterates its absolute support to all the peaceful measures and means adopted by the UAE to restore its sovereignty over its islands.

It expresses hope that Iran would comply with the call of His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin Sultan al Nuhayyan, president of the UAE, with regard to the holding of a direct dialogue between the UAE and the Islamic Republic of Iran concerning the latter's occupation of the three islands belonging to the UAE.

The Council condemns the noticeable escalation by Iranian media and its media campaign against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during March 1994 and its allegations, according to which the Kingdom is obstructing the Iranian pilgrims.

It expresses full support for the measures that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted to enable pilgrims to perform the duty of pilgrimage in comfort and tranquility, in accordance with the teachings of the pure Islamic tradition and the resolution of the foreign ministers of the Islamic states in their meeting in Amman, Jordan, during March 1988.

The Ministerial Council followed the developments in the Middle East peace process and in the occupied territories and expresses in this respect its great anxiety about the deterioration of the security situation and living conditions in the occupied Arab territories. It holds Israel fully responsible for the increase in the number of people killed among the sons of the fraternal Palestinian people, in a way that is in contradiction with the spirit of the peace process and represents a violation of the fourth Geneva Agreement.

In this respect also, the Council condemns Israel for the massacre carried out by the Israeli settlers against worshipers in Ibrahim's Mosque [Hebron]. It calls on the UN Security Council and the co-sponsors of the peace process, the United States and Russia, to speed up the implementation of the articles of UN Security Council's Resolution 904. This resolution concerns the condemnation of the massacre and the adoption of measures to guarantee the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians in all parts of the occupied Palestinian territories, which includes the provision of an international presence, the disarming of Israeli settlers, and the implementation of the fourth Geneva Agreement to the occupied Arab territories.

It stresses in this respect that the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are illegal according to international law and that their continued presence constitutes an obstacle to peace that is liable to rock confidence and

will not provide a suitable atmosphere for the achievement of a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

While welcoming the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement concerning an international presence in al-Khalil, and the resumption of the peace negotiations, the council reaffirms its full support for the peace process on all tracks aimed at reaching a just, permanent, and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the land-for peace principle, a full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands, primary among which is holy Jerusalem, and securing the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination.

The council reiterates its request to the international community to put pressure on Israel to carry out UN Security Council Resolution 425 to secure an immediate and unconditional withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

The Ministerial Council brought back to mind the recommendations of the 8th conference of the Damascus Declaration member states foreign ministers held in Damascus on 9-10 January 1994, and welcomed the graceful invitation made by the State of Kuwait to host the coming meeting of the Damascus declaration foreign ministers' conference, in implementation of Article 1 of the recommendations of the 8th Damascus Declaration member states foreign ministers' conference on the importance of continuing coordination and consultation in the political domain between the 8 countries regarding regional and international issues.

The council is following with interest the development of the political and security situation in fraternal Somalia, and it expresses its aspiration to see a reconciliation between the Somali factions. It welcomes the signing of the Nairobi agreement and hopes that this step will contribute to the restoration of security and stability to Somalia so that it will be able to resume the reconstruction and development march. The Ministerial Council also followed the latest developments of the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and it lauds the international efforts made to force the Serbs to withdraw their artillery from Sarajevo, and it urges the international community to take similar measures in the other security zones.

The council welcomes the signing of an agreement on the establishment of a Muslim-Croatian Federation in Bosnia and considers it a step toward restoring peace and security to the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and affirming its sovereignty, independence, and territorial unity.

It calls on the Security Council to enable the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina to exercise the right of legitimate self-defense in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, to lift the arms embargo imposed on it, and to tighten sanctions and redouble pressure on Serbia and Montenegro.

The council expresses its deep concern at the continuing deterioration of the situation in the sisterly Republic of Afghanistan, and calls on all the Afghan factions to put a halt to the fighting, to give priority to the national interest, and to respond to the United Nations efforts for that purpose so that security and stability can be restored throughout that sisterly country.

The council also discussed the minutes of a number of ministerial committees and approved them. It reaffirmed to the technical committees the necessity of completing implementation of the rules of the unified economic agreement, in line with decisions taken by the Higher Council.

The Ministerial Council also reviewed the situation in the international oil market, expressing the concern of its states over its instability. In that context, the Ministerial Council urged oil-producing states within and outside OPEC to respond to the appeal made by their majesties during the 14th session, and to cooperate in stabilizing the market.

The council expressed its satisfaction at the positive results of the latest round of the Gulf-American dialogue chaired by the Saudi minister of commerce representing the GCC, and the U.S. trade secretary, representing the United States. It the council hoped that the steps agreed upon would provide more support for cooperation between them.

The Ministerial Council is awaiting its fifth meeting with the European Union foreign ministers in Riyadh on 8 May 1994 and the issuing of resolutions that will serve cooperation between the two groups in various fields.

Issued in the city of Riyadh
On 3 April 1994.

His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign affairs minister, then declared the meetings closed.

Yemen's Salih Arrives in Salalah, Makes Statement

*JN0304143994 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic
1300 GMT 3 Mar 94*

[Excerpts] His Excellency Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman in the sisterly Republic of Yemen, arrived in the country at noon today on a two-day visit to the sultanate.

His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Said led those who received President Salih upon his arrival in Salalah Civil Airport. [passage omitted]

His excellency the Yemeni president made a statement to the press upon arrival in which he said: We are very happy to make this visit to the Sultanate of Oman to meet my dear brother His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id to discuss everything that concern our bilateral fraternal relations, which are eternal and warm relations based on amity, brotherly cooperation, mutual respect,

and good-neighborliness. These relations are witnessing continued progress in a manner that serves and benefits our mutual interests.

There are many subjects that will be discussed within the framework of continuous bilateral consultations, whether concerning developments in our country and the efforts made to contain the political crisis and safeguard Yemeni unity, or regarding regional and Arab issues and international developments that concern our two sisterly states or our Arab nation, foremost of which are the efforts to restore Arab solidarity.

He added: We greatly appreciate the sincere fraternal efforts our brothers in Oman are making and the efforts of the Omani military team within the joint military committee. These efforts realized several good results, such as stopping the military deterioration in our country. We also appreciate the eagerness shown by the Omani brothers to contain the crisis and protect the march of unity and stability in our country based on the awareness that stability is something that concern all brothers and neighbors of Yemen, and that Yemeni unity is an important and vital factor for security, stability, and peace in the region. This unity is an element that consolidates our Arab nation, which is in need now, more than at any other time, of unity, solidarity, and a basis of joint interests for the Arabs.

Oman has led the sisterly states that have supported and blessed the Yemeni unity. Probably, one of the positive elements realized by the unity was that it has made a solution to the border problem between Yemen and Oman possible. A border agreement was signed, and this agreement laid down a solid basis for developing fraternal bilateral relations to realize the joint aspirations of the two sisterly and neighborly peoples. The agreement demonstrated a model that can be followed in solving border problems and establishing strong relations between brothers and neighbors.

We are confident that our Yemeni people, thanks to the support of their brothers, will be able, God willing, to overcome all the challenges posed by the crisis, in order to continue their march and work toward achieving their objectives of progress and development under the banner of unity, which is an umbrella of security and peace in our Yemeni homeland and the region.

Oman

Yemen's Salih, al-Bid Hold Talks With Sultan

*JN0304201194 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic
1900 GMT 3 Apr 94*

[Excerpts] At al-Hisn Palace in Salalah this evening, His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id held a round of talks with Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council in Yemen, and his deputy 'Ali Salim al-Bid. They discussed recent developments in Yemen against the backdrop of the Yemeni differences

and Oman's role in bridging the Yemeni parties' views with the object of working out appropriate solutions that could ensure the unity and stability of the Yemeni Republic and bring about prosperity and advancement to its people. The talks also addressed the developing ties between Oman and the Yemeni Republic and bilateral cooperation in the best interests of the two sides and the region.

His Majesty Sultan Qabus and Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih had earlier met separately at al-Hisn Palace to discuss bilateral cooperation. They also considered Yemeni developments and what Oman could do to help bridge the views of the sides to the Yemeni dispute so as to ensure Yemen's unity and security and regional stability. The talks also touched on issues of shared interest, as well as Arab and Islamic concerns. [passage omitted]

His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id this evening also convened a round of talks with 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Council. They reviewed Yemeni developments, the efforts being exerted to contain the Yemeni crisis, and other issues of shared interest. [passage omitted]

Al-Bid arrived in Oman this evening for a visit lasting [words indistinct].

Upon his arrival, al-Bid said he was glad to be visiting sisterly Oman for consultations with Sultan Qabus on all issues of interest to the two sides, as well as Yemeni developments following the signing of the accord document. In this regard, he said, His Majesty Sultan Qabus has a key and important role to play. His majesty's government, he added, has exerted considerable efforts that all the Yemenis appreciate and recognize. In my talks with his majesty the sultan, we will address all these issues, al-Bid concluded. [passage omitted]

Government Seeking International Help With Oil Slick

NC0204180694 Paris AFP in English 1726 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Al-Fujayrah, United Arab Emirates, April 2 (AFP)—The Gulf emirate of al-Fujayrah called Saturday [2 April] for international help to fight an oil slick which has hit 30 kilometers (18 miles) of coastline, killing fish and turtles.

Al-Fujayrah officials said Saturday that 15,900 tonnes of oil—more than twice the initial estimates—spilled from the supertanker Seki after it collided with the tanker Baynunah in the Gulf of Oman on Wednesday.

International "help is now required to prevent a major disaster to the area's beaches and marine life," a al-Fujayrah government spokesman said.

"Large quantities of oil have come ashore on the beaches between Lu'lu'iyah and Ras Qadnah, accompanied by dead fish, turtles and other forms of marine life," he said, adding that scientists had been sent to investigate the damage.

Salvage teams from several oil and shipping companies were so far working with the UAE coast guard.

Al-Fujayrah port officials said Hugh Parker, a pollution expert from the London-based International Tanker Owners' Pollution Federation, had arrived in the emirate and started helicopter flights over the spillage.

The anti-pollution firm Fairdeal deployed three skimmers to tackle the slick, and operators said later they had collected more than 1,500 tonnes (10,950 barrels) of oil.

Each of the skimmers can collect 20 tonnes (146 barrels) of crude every 30 minutes and salvage experts said more than three days would be needed to clear up the slick.

"We are focusing on the beach area to prevent pollution, but the problem is that the wind is variable and the crude is spreading," Fairdeal general manager Captain Michael Sarros said.

"So far there is no threat to the desalination plants or the nearby Omani coast. But we cannot speculate on the consequences right now," he said, adding that the spillage covered around eight square kilometres (3.2 square miles).

Captain Musa Murad of al-Fujayrah port told AFP that the slick covered the stretch of coast north of Khawr Fakkan.

"It's a catastrophe. Thirty kilometres of coastline have been hit by the oil slick," he said.

The al-Fujayrah spokesman said that according to Seki officials around 15,900 tonnes of oil was spilled into the sea, but the spillage from the ruptured tank had stopped Saturday.

First reports said around 7,000 tonnes had leaked.

"Our initial hopes of containing the spill were dashed when weather conditions altered during the early hours of Friday morning moving the slick directly to our shores," he said.

The 56,300-tonne Baynunah, built in South Korea, joined the Abu Dhabi National Tanker Company (ADNATCO) in 1983.

ADNATCO said the tanker was about to head for Kuwait to pick a shipment of crude for Japan when it collided with the 282,000-tonne Panama-registered Seki some 10 nautical miles (17 kilometres) off al-Fujairah.

Port officials in al-Fujayrah daily handle up to 50 tankers arriving to load up with fuel by ship-to-ship transfers.

The last accident at the port occurred in 1986 when a tanker hit a mine during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

In another accident, a fire-gutted supertanker barred from port for two weeks will be allowed to dock in the

Gulf after it has unloaded its oil in the next few days, an official with the firm towing the tanker said Friday.

The Greek-owned Stolidi, carrying the charred bodies of 18 Filipinos killed in a March 20 fire, will transfer its 225,000 tonnes of oil to another ship, an International Marine Services official said.

"The Stolidi is now in Gulf waters and unloading operations may start in two or three days about five to 10 nautical miles off the coast of Dubai or Sharjah" in the United Arab Emirates, he said.

United Arab Emirates

Shaykh Zayid Meets Former South Yemeni President

JN0304133094 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1140 GMT
3 Apr 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 3 Apr (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], received in Abu Dhabi today 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, former South Yemeni president, as part of the good offices the UAE president is extending to help end the Yemeni political crisis, safeguard Yemeni national unity, and maintain the security and stability of Yemen and its people.

During the meeting, they reviewed the efforts being made to contain the Yemeni problems and achieve reconciliation among the Yemeni brothers.

Yemen

Salih, Omani Head Meet, Discuss Bilateral Issues

JN0404062694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network
in Arabic 0430 GMT 4 Apr 94

[Text] A meeting among brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council; His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman; brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council; and His Highness Tuwayni Bin-Shihab, the personal representative of His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id, was held at 2030 yesterday at al-Hisn Palace in Salalah in the Sultanate of Oman.

During the meeting, the conferees discussed brotherly relations between the two fraternal countries, Yemen and Oman. The conferees also discussed efforts under way to contain the political crisis and enhance unity and stability in Yemen.

An official round of Yemeni-Omani talks was held under brother Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman. The session was attended by members of the delegations of the two sides.

Following the joint session, brother Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id held a

closed session. The Yemeni News Agency, SABA', has learned that talks addressed the warm brotherly relations between the two fraternal countries and ways of enhancing them, as well as developments in Yemen in light of the efforts taking place to contain the political crisis, reactivate constitutional agencies, and implement the accord document. The purpose of this is to safeguard unity, democracy, and stability in Yemen and enhance security and stability in the region.

In addition, several regional, Arab, and world issues and developments were discussed, primarily issues of interest to the two fraternal countries.

His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman received in Salalah yesterday evening brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council and secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party. Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid arrived in the Sultanate of Oman yesterday from the United Arab Emirates. He was received at Salalah airport by His Highness Tuwayni Bin-Shihab Al Sa'id, the personal representative of His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id, and several other Omani officials.

President, Vice President To Meet in Cairo

NC0304050194 London MBC Television in Arabic 2100
GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Informed sources in Aden have told MBC that Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his deputy 'Ali Salim al-Bid will meet in Cairo on 4 March to discuss the possibility of implementing the Pledge and Accord Document.

Cairo Meeting Denied

JN0304062494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network
in Arabic 0430 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] An official source at the General Committee of the General People's Congress [GPC], in a statement to the Yemeni News Agency, SABA', has expressed the GPC command's amazement at a report aired by the London-based Middle East Broadcasting Center, MBC, yesterday. The report says that brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman and GPC secretary general, will meet with his deputy, brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, in Cairo on 4 April. The source said that the GPC command knows nothing about this report, and that the brother chairman of the Presidential Council will pay an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman today, Sunday, at the invitation of his brother His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id.

Parliament Speaker Discusses Crisis With Egyptian Envoy

JN0204182094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network
in Arabic 1700 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Brother Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the House of Representatives, today received brother Badr 'Allam, assistant Egyptian foreign minister

and President Mubarak's envoy. The brother speaker welcomed the Egyptian delegation to Yemen and thanked them for their country's sincere efforts on behalf of resolving our country's crisis. Al-Ahmar called for sustained efforts to ensure that the state institutions resumed their normal business and that the accord document is implemented.

For his part, the Egyptian official said he was happy to see all parties show a positive response to the efforts being exerted to resolve the crisis.

The meeting was attended by House member brother Jubran Mujahid Abu-Shawarib.

Foreign Minister Interviewed on Somalia, Yemeni Crisis

NC0104194294 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 1620 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Interview with Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah by Safa' Hijazi in Cairo, date not given; from the "Arabs' Home" program—recorded]

[Text] [Hijazi] Mr. Yemeni Foreign Minister and Chairman of the 101st session of the Arab Foreign Ministers' Council: Following the withdrawal of the international forces from Somalia, which coincided with the signing of the national reconciliation accord among the Somali leaders in Nairobi, what is the role of the Arab forces? Was this topic placed on the agenda?

[Basindwah] At this session the council was informed that some Arab states that have contributed forces to the peacekeeping troops in Somalia intend to withdraw their forces. Naturally, if the Somalis agree among themselves and engage in a quiet and objective dialogue, they will not need forces to safeguard their security and stability. It seems that the existing situation in Somalia will not continue. Somalia will inevitably emerge from its current crisis, God willing.

[Hijazi] Yemen is a member of the Arab League. Yemen's security is part of Arab national security. How can Yemen overcome its domestic crisis and what are the latest developments in this crisis?

[Basindwah] Thank you for your question. On this occasion I would like to make it clear that the situation in Yemen is now better than before. The cabinet convened in Aden on Wednesday. It reconvened in Aden on Sunday. The cabinet is expected to meet in Ta'izz tomorrow. The Presidential Council will meet in Sanaa tomorrow. We hope all constitutional establishments will resume their work in Sanaa within one month. Naturally, if what has happened in Yemen had happened

in another Arab country or another developing country, civil war would have broken out. Despite the passage of seven months since the crisis began, we Yemenis have not been dragged into a civil war or ferocious infighting. This proves that despite our differences and disputes, we have been able to steady our nerves and apply political pressure on each other without reaching the level of a civil war.

GPC Official Assassinated in Ta'izz

JN0204101294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0912 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Sanaa, 2 Apr (INA)—Muhammad Humud al-Warifi, member of Yemen's General People's Congress [GPC], has been shot dead in Ta'izz Governorate, south of Sanaa.

The GPC, which is led by Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, said in a statement today that GPC member Muhammad Humud al-Warifi, 35, the head of the GPC's second district branch in Ta'izz, was assassinated by unidentified gunmen in Ta'izz at noon yesterday.

It is noteworthy that this is the second assassination incident within one week targeting members of the two ruling partners, the GPC and the Yemeni Socialist Party, which announced on Sunday that one of its members, a military officer, was killed in Sanaa, the capital.

INA Notes Kidnapping of 2 Chinese 'Experts'

JN0304152594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1440 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Sanaa, 3 Apr (INA)—Yemeni gunmen today kidnapped two members of a Chinese team that is working on the Jihanah-Ma'rib road project, 49 km northeast of the Yemeni capital, Sanaa.

To free the two Chinese experts, the kidnappers are demanding that work on the road, which extends over 76 km along the Saudi-Yemeni border, be stopped. The project was started in 1991.

On 12 February, Yemeni gunmen kidnapped three Chinese experts working on the same project. The experts were released on 21 February.

Informed Yemeni sources have indicated that the Saudi regime is behind the kidnapping, and that this regime seeks to obstruct the project, which, once completed, would allow the Yemeni authorities to control smuggling, curb acts of economic sabotage, and check the Saudi regime's ambition to expand into Yemeni territory.

Foreign Minister Interviewed on Embargo, Kuwait
*NC0104192194 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 1620
GMT 1 Apr 94*

[Interview with Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf by Safa' Hijazi in Cairo, date not given; from the "Arabs' Home" program—recorded]

[Text] [Hijazi] Your Excellency Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, Iraq recently announced it might reconsider its stand on Kuwait if the air blockade of Iraq is lifted. What is your comment?

[Al-Sahhaf] As you know, Iraq has sent the Security Council a letter signed by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz. The letter factually explains Iraq's implementation of the measures required of it in accordance with Resolution 687. The letter asks the Security Council to implement Paragraph 22 because the Security Council is responsible for its implementation. The Security Council is committed to implementing this paragraph after Iraq implements what is required of it. Paragraph 22 calls for lifting the economic blockade of Iraq. However, if there are pressures on the Security Council and Iraq implements its commitments but the Security Council does not implement its commitments, it is the right of Iraq and the Iraqi people to take measures that keep them alive and ensure their future.

[Hijazi] Regarding the stand on Kuwait, what is meant by this stand on Kuwait? Is it the border or the issue of the prisoners?

[Al-Sahhaf] During contacts between Iraq and a number of governments that are members of the Security Council, the representatives of these governments raised the subject of Kuwait with the Iraqi delegations. Iraq's answer was and still is based on the paragraphs of the UN Security Council resolution. In other words, this subject is not connected with the economic blockade. Paragraph 22 says that if Iraq implements certain paragraphs dealing with weapons of mass destruction, the Security Council will implement Paragraph 22 and lift the embargo on Iraqi exports. The subject of Kuwait has no connection with this paragraph. If the Security Council member states want to talk about this subject, Iraq believes that movement toward implementation of Paragraph 22 should not stop. If Paragraph 22 is implemented and the economic blockade of Iraq is lifted, then a positive atmosphere will be created that will help talks to take place on this subject. Iraq has expressed its readiness to begin discussions with the Security Council on this subject.

[Hijazi] The Arab League secretary general has sent two envoys to the Iraqi Government on the subject of Kuwaiti prisoners. Recently, it was reported that if Kuwaiti authorities release the defendants in the attempt to assassinate former U.S. President Bush, then Iraq will reconsider the subject of prisoners, in the sense that Iraq has some prisoners.

[Al-Sahhaf] First of all, this issue is completely groundless. It is a fabrication. The secretary general sent three envoys: 'Abdallah Adam, Rashid Idris, and Mayhub al-Bayhubi. The three envoys came to Baghdad in the past two years only as part of an attempt or an initiative by Secretary General Dr. 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid to help resolve this problem, which he describes as hurting the general atmosphere. We reiterated to all three envoys—as we explained to the Security Council and the International Committee of the Red Cross ICRC—that there are no prisoners or detainees in Iraq at all. This issue concerns missing people. We are ready to cooperate with all parties to probe and investigate to discover the fate of these missing people. Iraq received the files on 625 missing people. We have formed special committees that are searching for and gathering information on these missing people. We are ready to share any information we gather on any individual whose name is mentioned and who has a file, with the ICRC and the Arab League secretary. And, as I said in the news conference, we are prepared to cooperate with the Gulf states on this subject.

Health Minister Returns From Cairo

*JN0304170694 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio
Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 3 Apr 94*

[Text] Minister of Health Dr. Umid Midhat Mubarak returned to Baghdad today after attending meetings of the Arab health ministers' council, which convened in Cairo on 30 March.

In a statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, the minister said that the Iraqi delegation was held in high esteem by most conferees, who demanded that the unfair embargo clamped on the lofty Iraqi people be lifted, particularly since this embargo has claimed the lives of thousands of children, women, and elderly due to acute food and medicine shortages.

The minister noted that he held a private meeting with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid. During the meeting, the actual reasons for maintaining the unfair anti-Iraq embargo were addressed. The minister explained that the Arab League secretary general demonstrated special concern for this issue, and urged all Arab League offices in the world to clarify the relevant facts to the world public to aid efforts to lift the unfair embargo clamped on the Iraqi people.

The minister also indicated that he held other meetings with the heads of most delegations attending the meetings. He noted that he discussed with them bilateral ties and means of promoting them, especially in the area of health. The minister also met with Regional WHO Director Dr. Husayn al-Jazairi.

The conferees attending the Cairo meeting discussed the enhancement of health cooperation among the Arab health agencies, as well as other issues to promote the Arab health endeavor.

Gunmen Kill AFP Correspondent, Bodyguard in Ambush

NC0304195794 Paris AFP in English 1936 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Nicosia, April 3 (AFP)—Gunmen shot dead an AFP correspondent and her bodyguard in an ambush near al-Sulaymaniyah in Iraqi Kurdistan on Sunday [3 April], UN aid workers said.

Lissy Schmidt, a 35-year-old German, was travelling by car with her Iraqi Kurdish bodyguard when they were attacked east of the city. Steven Allen of UNICEF in the northern Iraqi town of Irbil told AFP by telephone.

The ambush occurred at 1:00 p.m. (0900 GMT).

Schmidt was the only foreign journalist permanently based in Iraqi Kurdistan, which has had de facto autonomy since a Kurdish uprising against the Baghdad regime following the January-February 1991 Gulf war.

She worked for AFP and the German media, notably the Frankfurter Rundschau and Tagesspiegel newspapers.

Deputy Prime Minister Comments on 'New Order' of U.S.

JN0404080194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1930 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 3 Apr (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, Ba'th Party National Command member and deputy prime minister, has stated that the new order championed by the United States will inevitably fail because it is based on hegemony, exploitation, and aggression.

In a speech at the opening of the cultural season organized by the secretariat of Arab students in Baghdad, Ramadan said that the dissension among the UN Security Council members on the question of the embargo imposed on Iraq is a positive element in Iraq's interest. He said this positive stand can be viewed as a victory for the Iraqis who have scored it thanks to their steadfastness, struggle, abidance by their principles and rights, and their rallying around Saddam Husayn, the leader of the brilliant march.

Ramadan urged the oppressed people to resist injustice and hegemonistic policies. He said the Iraqis alone shattered the myth of U.S. monopoly of the world and showed how false is the belief that there is a united stand against Iraq which the United States had created through its deceptive and misleading policies and its colonialistic blackmail methods.

Ramadan said that by distancing themselves from the United States and Britain, some UN Security Council members have exposed the falsehood of the U.S. claims and how they are violating international laws and conventions to achieve their designs and interests at the expense of other people and countries.

Columnist Examines 'Curse' of Iraqis on Enemies

JN0204171994 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 26 Mar 94 p 8

["From the Heart" column by Ghazi al-'Ayyash: "Iraq's Curse"]

[Text] A note to the reader: The Iraqi people have a high measure of pride and enjoy strong values. Therefore, it is perfectly in character for them not to reflect on small deeds and spiteful acts by their enemies when those enemies fall into the trap of their own evil or receive a dire, divine punishment. Hence, we have not gloated over what has happened to the criminals who planned and carried out the 30-state aggression, thus demonstrating the most remarkable degree of moral nobility. However, the truly Iraqi, Ghazi al-'Ayyash, unlike the rest of the Iraqis, could no longer tolerate the kind and magnitude of the crimes of the enemies of humanity. So he wrote the following lines that express legitimate human feelings.

[Signed: the Chief Editor]

The collapse of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in Santiago, Chile, was not the first such incident for one of the symbols of the 30-state aggression against Iraq. Former U.S. President George Bush had earlier fainted in Tokyo, Japan. Both collapsed in front of television cameras worldwide, just as bulls collapse when they are about to enter a slaughterhouse and approach their end. George Bush collapsed like a worn bull that fought in battles too great for him. Margaret Thatcher fell and her head drooped like a sick sheep falling under the feet of its herd.

Here, we are not gloating, nor praying to God for the death of George Bush, Margaret Thatcher, or others whose hands were smeared with the blood of the innocent Iraqis, those who had a hand in imposing an unjust embargo against the Iraqi people, or those who denied Iraqi children and sick people food and medicine, thus causing their death en masse. We have faith and know that we are all going to die. However, we pray to God for their long suffering and agony. We pray to God to infect them with scabies that make their bodies itch constantly, denying them sleep at night and the joys of life in daytime.

We pray to God to make those people lose their eyesight, having lost their insight. We pray that their minds and tongues be paralyzed, and that their hearts be rent over the death of their most beloved ones. We pray that their spite will eat into their bodies and those of their grandchildren. We pray they lose their way in the desert, naked and barefoot, and look for a drop of water but find only a mirage. We hope they are denied everything they like, that they will never feel happy and that they will lose their minds. We hope they will turn into a laughable joke to amuse children. We hope adults will kick them as well.

The curse of the Iraqis shall haunt them, just like the curse of the Pharaohs has been haunting those who infringe upon their boundaries, sanctity, rights, and land. The curse of the Iraqis has begun to haunt them, for mysterious diseases are eating away their soldiers and earthquakes and volcanoes are destroying American cities and the cities of other countries that took part in the aggression against Iraq. Gorbachev has been overwhelmed by the disgrace of the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the tribulations of its peoples. Shevardnadze, who was foreign minister of the Soviet Union during the 30-state aggression against Iraq and who contributed to this aggression, is today crying over the rubble of his country, Georgia, and its ordeal and is seeking shelter under the spears of the soldiers of another country. British Prime Minister John Major is now

walking on thin ice. Any moment now, he could fall into a bottomless abyss from which he will never return.

The symptoms of the Iraq curse have started to appear on U.S. President Bill Clinton. He still has not come up with a way to handle the Whitewater scandal. The world economy is being shaken and is about to collapse. The governments that contributed to the aggression against Iraq have all fallen, haunted by the curse of their scandals and their people's disavowal of them. They have fallen into the abyss. Some of them are still waiting. This is the inevitable fate of all tyrants and despots. It is a natural outcome of what they did to a faithful, peaceful people, the people of Iraq. The curse of the Iraqis promises them more dire consequences.

Rabin Comments on Palestinian, Syrian Tracks

TA0104202094 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew
1 Apr 94 p 15

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by Daniyel Bloch, Moti Bassok, and On Levi; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [DAVAR] Will we be ready to withdraw from Gaza and Jericho even before all the fine details of the Gaza and Jericho agreement are worked out?

[Rabin] We should make a distinction between withdrawing—that is, ceding the overall responsibility—and between starting to implement certain elements of the agreement, even if all the details have not been concluded yet—providing the security issues are being implemented in a clear and well-organized manner. After all, we must set up completely new security networks there. We have to establish a foundation for the Palestinian police force which will assume responsibility in Gaza. Greater Gaza numbers 250,000 Palestinians. I have no desire to see Israeli soldiers and policemen roaming there. They have no business being there once a Palestinian element assumes responsibility for law and order and for preventing terrorism in Gaza, but this cannot happen overnight.

We must prove to the enemies of peace on all sides that despite the despicable murders of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the Islamic Jihad, the rejectionist front organizations and those coming from the Israeli side—mainly the crime of that murderer from Qiryat Arba' whose name does not deserve mention—that we are continuing the process.

[DAVAR] In view of the present situation, wherein every step forward is followed by three steps backward, is it not preferable to skip over the interim stages?

[Rabin] It is impossible to skip over the interim stages, because that would lead to a complete stalemate. If we start dealing with the permanent solution, the problems of Jerusalem, the settlements, and the borders will crop up. The main test now is to continue the negotiations and to implement the Gaza-Jericho First agreement. I understand the Palestinians' and 'Arafat's predicament, but he has to understand—just as I and the Israeli Government do—that any delay only causes problems in implementing the agreement and is helping the enemies of peace on both sides foil it. The answer is that both sides overcome all the difficulties and realize that the appropriate answer to the enemies of peace is to attain and implement the agreement. [passage omitted]

[DAVAR] There are those who claim—some ministers included—that in order to minimize the friction in Hebron the Jewish settlers should be evacuated now, without waiting for the next stages.

[Rabin] I do not want to remark here on various operative proposals. When I was prime minister between

1974-1977 I did not permit any Jewish settlement in Hebron. Now, however, after the fact and on the basis of the Declaration of Principles, we are not uprooting settlements. It is very probable that in the special circumstances of Hebron, as long as the small Jewish settlement exists there, we will have to find other arrangements which would provide security to the 120,000 residents of Hebron vis-a-vis the 415 Jews living there.

[DAVAR] Will you at least make sure that no more Jews move there?

[Rabin] I do not want to enter the details.

[DAVAR] Was it not possible to evacuate the two minor Jewish enclaves in Hebron a long time ago?

[Rabin] Tall al-Rumaythah was established in August 1984, a month after the elections and a month prior to the establishment of the national unity government. The place is an archaeological site, perhaps even a cemetery. Mrs. Pli'a Albeck, who approved the Jewish holdings there, at the time stated that it is forbidden to dig in that ground and is necessary to dwell in mobile homes there because they do not call for digging foundations in the ground. If anybody dared to build a road somewhere in Israel over such a site, a great outcry would have ensued. Some seven or eight families live there. Two people under administrative arrest live there—Barukh Marzel and No'am Federman. One of them is under detention and the other is on the wanted list. The decision to settle there was stupid, it is the classical example of a stupid political decision.

[DAVAR] Is not the presence of five armies in Hebron—the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], armed settlers, international observers, the Palestinian police, and Hamas people—a sure recipe for a powder keg?

[Rabin] Unfortunately it has already been proven that Hebron is a powder keg. Today we are paying the price of this despicable murderer, the lives of Jews worldwide and in Israel have been endangered by him. The first thing we must do now is to provide security for both Jews and Arabs in the present layout, with a urban police force and international presence. This is the price we must pay for the crime perpetrated by the despicable murderer in the Cave of the Patriarchs. [passage omitted]

[DAVAR] How do you see the West Bank following the withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho?

[Rabin] I regard Gaza as marginal for Israel's future and security. The status of Judaea and Samaria, from both the historical-religious and the security aspects, is totally different. My national priorities are as follows: United Jerusalem has top priority. Then come parts of Judaea and Samaria, the Golan Heights, and Gaza is in last place.

[DAVAR] Will you consider the removal of problematic settlements such as Netzarim following the withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho?

[Rabin] I want to adhere to the agreement. At this stage we are not discussing the removal of settlements. In Hebron we somewhat deviated from the agreement by accepting the international presence, but here we are paying the price of the despicable murderer from Qiryat Arba'.

[DAVAR] There are assessments according to which if we declare our willingness to withdraw from all of the Golan, a full peace agreement with Syria can be attained in a short time.

[Rabin] I maintained that in the previous circumstances, faced by an inflexible Syrian position, we should have given priority to negotiations with the Palestinians. I hope that upon the resumption of the talks in late April Syria will evince a new willingness. We must remember that the Palestinians do not constitute a threat to Israel's existence. The main problem with them has to do with the personal security of Israelis. A strategic threat to Israel's existence comes from the direction of Arab armies, and it is possible that in future they will be supported by military aid from another Muslim country. This is where we invest most of our defense budget. We do not need the F-15's, F-16's, Apache helicopter gunships, and Merkava tanks for our confrontation with the Palestinians. This is why we need a peace agreement with Syria, but it must be a peace treaty which will provide Israel with strategic security. With the Palestinians we are trying to create a new reality which will improve chances for coexistence. In the framework of the interim arrangement we are trying to bring about coexistence in a different format than today, a format enabling the Palestinians to run their own lives and defend themselves.

[DAVAR] Based on what you heard from Clinton about his meeting with al-Asad, and on what Ambassador Rabinovich told you, do you think there are any chances for a breakthrough with Syria?

[Rabin] I always believe there is a chance. But I cannot tell you that this breakthrough is within reach at this stage.

[DAVAR] Are there secret contacts with Syria?

[Rabin] Unfortunately, no.

[DAVAR] Turning to Lebanon, it looks as though things are getting worse there. Palestinian terror organizations have taken advantage of the agreement with the Hizballah for firing katyusha missiles at our northern settlements for the second time.

[Rabin] There is no point in downplaying this. There has been an escalation in Hizballah activity, and Palestinian organizations have been joining this activity more

intensely than before. At the same time, the understandings remain in effect even if there are occasional deviations. If I am not mistaken, there were two such cases since last July. At the same time, for the last eight or nine months calm and security have prevailed along the northern border. The IDF and SLA [South Lebanese Army] are paying a dear price for maintaining this security.

[DAVAR] In retrospect, do you not think it would have been preferable to continue Operation Accountability for another few days in order to attain a better agreement?

[Rabin] No, we achieved our main objective. It would have been a grave mistake to repeat the Lebanon War.

[DAVAR] What expectations do you have of your upcoming meeting with Yeltsin?

[Rabin] I have not asked for this meeting. He invited me, and during the visit in late April I will try—if nothing unexpected happens—to discuss various political issues with him and with the top Russian echelon. We are witnessing renewed Russian political activity. This is not up to us, it is a fact. We are mainly coordinating our moves with the United States, but we cannot ignore the fact that Russia has been a partner, together with the United States, in the Madrid process and the ensuing negotiations, and we must maintain the dialogue with it. The second important aspect of this visit will be the meeting with Russian Jewry.

[DAVAR] Can the Russians offer any help on the Syrian track?

[Rabin] It is hard to answer this question before I speak with Yeltsin.

[DAVAR] Will you ask Yeltsin to act on the issue of the POW's and MIA's?

[Rabin] Everywhere I go I raise this issue, including during my meeting with the pope. [passage omitted]

[DAVAR] A group of South African scientists have threatened to reveal the secrets of nuclear and missile cooperation between Israel and South Africa. Are you concerned about this?

[Rabin] I am not concerned about anything relating to what you term the nuclear cooperation between Israel and South Africa, because there never was such cooperation. [passage omitted]

Rabin Promises No Settlements To Be Uprooted

TA0304143194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Several settlement leaders in the territories said that in their meeting this morning, Prime Minister Rabin promised them not to evacuate Jews from Hebron, not to change the location of the Jewish neighborhoods in the town, and that all the settlements in the

Gaza Strip, including Dugit, Netzarim, and Kfar Darom will remain where they are at least until the final settlement is implemented.

The settlement leaders also told our correspondent Gil Litman that the prime minister confirmed in the meeting that there has been a significant rise in the number of stone-throwing and firebomb incidents in Judea and Samaria in recent weeks. Rabin told them he believes there are now five times more incidents than there were in the past. Mr. Rabin promised the settlement leaders that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] would step up its activities against those who disturb the peace in the territories. Those attending the meeting were Uri Ari'el, secretary of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip; Rabbi Yo'el Bin-Nun of 'Ofra, and Tzvi Hendel, head of the Hof 'Aza Regional Council.

Peres Foresees Agreement on Prisoner Release

TA0304143294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres hopes the Gaza-Jericho agreement will be signed and finalized in letter and spirit in April. He is convinced that a far-reaching agreement will be attained on the release of Palestinian prisoners. Minister Peres refused to voice his position on the evacuation of the Jewish settlement from Hebron. He was speaking with Shim'on Aran, Qol Yisra'el's Arabic program correspondent, during the Mimuna celebrations in Yaquq Park in the Sharon area.

Minister: Hebron Accord 'Victory for the Palestinians'

TA0104180194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] Economics Minister Shim'on Shetrit says now that Israel has agreed to the Palestinian demand for international observers in Hebron, the Jewish settlers in the town must not be evacuated. In an interview with reporter Dick Winter, he called the agreement a victory for the Palestinians:

[Begin Shetrit recording] I hope that the fact that there are international observers, that all those who suggest moving out the Jewish residents in Hebron would stop talking about it, because you cannot at the same time say that in order to secure the security of the Palestinians you need international observers and at the same time to say get out all the Jews; either way. If they have accepted international observers, you assume that they are going to do this service of what is termed as protection of the Palestinians, so if was the requirement, we cannot agree both to this and to other measures. This is enough. [end recording]

Likud, NRP Demand Session on Palestinian Police

TA0304064194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Two opposition Knesset factions, the Likud and the National Religious Party [NRP], are due to submit to the parliamentary secretariat the 30 signatures required for a special plenary session. It would take up the issue of the deployment of the Palestinian police in the territories.

NRP Knesset Member Hanan Porat told Qol Yisra'el that the urgent session was being called because the house had not been given any details about the makeup and strength of the force, not its equipment. Porat said that facts were being created on the ground without the knowledge and approval of the Knesset.

Knesset To Hold Special Session

TA0404091694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 4 Apr 94

[Text] The Knesset will hold a special session next week. Among other things, it will discuss the government decision to repatriate Palestinian deportees and to place foreign observers in Hebron. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the Likud faction this morning submitted the 30 Knesset members' signatures, required to summon the house for a session during its recess.

The Likud says that stationing observers gravely violates Israel's sovereignty and attests to the fact that the government is losing control at this time.

IDF Foresees No Reduction in Army Service in Hebron

TA0104175594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] Army sources told Qol Yisra'el that they do not expect any reduction in army service in the Hebron area in the wake of the agreement. It will take time for the Norwegian, Danish, and Italian observers to establish some framework for operating in the town with the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the Palestinians. In any event, Israeli officials are stressing that this is not a precedent and that responsibility for security remains with the IDF.

Troops Reportedly Evacuate Base in Gaza City

NC0304154894 Paris AFP in English 1526 GMT 3 Apr 94

[By Sakhr Abu-al-'Awn]

[Text] Gaza City, Occupied Gaza Strip, April 3 (AFP)—Israeli troops completed their evacuation of the largest military base in Gaza City on Sunday [3 April] after emptying its prison, Palestinian officials said.

Witnesses said an armoured vehicle and a truck were the last equipment driven out of the "Seafront" army camp as Israel and the PLO resumed talks in Cairo to try to launch autonomous rule in Gaza and Jericho within 10 days.

A couple of soldiers however remained in a look-out post and border police were on duty outside the base known as "Hof" in Hebrew.

PLO officials, who refused to be named, said the last prisoners in the jail at the camp had been moved to other facilities. Until early March 200 men were held at the prison, known to Palestinians as "Ansar II".

The army first began removing soldiers and materiel from the Seafront base in November.

The army steadfastly refuses to confirm details of any pullout, but the first Palestinian policemen are expected to be deployed in the territories during the coming week.

Palestinian witnesses also said equipment including an electronic gate had been dismantled at the army headquarters nearby in the centre of Gaza City.

Activity at the sprawling HQ appeared to have been reduced to a minimum, they said, noting a drastic reduction in the usually constant comings and goings.

Israeli forces are set to pull back to three core areas on the Gaza Strip from where they will maintain security for the 4,000 Jewish settlers who are set to remain on the strip under the September 13 autonomy agreement.

In the aftermath of the February 25 Hebron mosque massacre, the PLO and Israel have pledged to speed up the implementation of Palestinian self-rule.

Meanwhile Israeli police also started a pullout from Jericho on Sunday, but under a hail of stones from Palestinian youths, an AFP correspondent reported.

A police spokesman confirmed that equipment had been taken out, but said the 18 Israeli policemen and five Palestinian employees would remain in place in Jericho for the time being.

And as part of the Cairo security accord package under which 160 lightly-armed foreign observers are to be deployed in Hebron, the Israeli military restored Mustafa al-Natshah as mayor of Hebron on Sunday, more than 10 years after abolishing his role.

Court Rejects Warning Request on Settler Evacuation

TA0304171394 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1400 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The government does not plan on giving prior warning of any decision to evacuate Jewish settlers from Hebron, according to the State Attorney's Office response to a High Court of Justice appeal by Uri Karzan, a resident of Tall al-Rumaythah. Karzan, who

demanding that the security forces be ordered to give prior warning of a decision to evacuate Jews, withdrew his appeal after being convinced that the government does not intend to make such a move in the near future. Yiftah El'azar reports:

The scenario was probably taken from the settlement leaders' threats in the media: Thousands of settlers flowing into Hebron preventing the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] from evacuating the Jewish settlers. Uri Karzan, a resident of Tall al-Rumaythah, appealed to the High Court to give prior warning of any evacuation. The state's response indicates that the government is worried that the above scenario could turn into reality. An early warning, the State Attorney's Office said, might foil the implementation of the government's decision. Although the government did not accept Karzan's demand for an early warning, Attorney Elyaqim Ha'etzni withdrew the appeal. [passage omitted]

Karzel became convinced that the government does not plan to transfer the Hebron settlers at this stage. The state attorney said so in the response to the appeal. The government added in more legal terms: There is no reason why Karzel cannot appeal to the High Court after a decision on evacuation is made and he should not try to put the cart before the horse. The High Court, however, gave Karzel the right to appeal later on.

Gaza Settlement Dugit 'Abandoned' by Inhabitants

TA0404112094 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in
Hebrew 4 Apr 94 p 5

[Report by David Regev]

[Excerpt] Last night the residents of the Dugit settlement in the northern Gaza Strip abandoned their settlement and set up an encampment on the Israeli side of the border. The encampment was a protest against what they termed a deterioration in the state of security.

"We do not intend to return to Dugit any more. We fear for our lives. If they cannot protect us, they should compensate us and let us leave," two settlers, Tova Goren and Orit Qariti, said last night.

The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the police placed guards at the encampment and declared the new settlement a closed military zone, permitting the settlers to stay on the site till morning. [passage omitted]

Lubrani on Reported Hand Over of Hizballah Fighters

TA0104182594 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1
Network in Hebrew 1730 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] The Syrian Army handed over 11 Hizballah fighters to the Lebanese Army last night. They had been arrested about three weeks ago in the course of a violent demonstration to mark Jerusalem Day held in Ba'l-abakk, an area under Syrian control in Lebanon.

Uri Lubrani, coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, told our correspondent Yoram Kohen that as far as is known this is the first time such an event has occurred. If it is true, Lubrani added, this is a step in the right direction aimed at curbing terror in Lebanon.

Police Capture Fugitive Kakh Leader

TA0304043294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Barukh Marzel, who was sought by the police for three weeks, was arrested a short while ago in the settlement of Bney Sever, south of Qiryat Arba'.

Our police affairs correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that detectives from the National Unit for Serious Crimes Investigations, policemen from the Judeaea Region, and a Border Police contingent captured Barukh Marzel at his hideout. He is currently being interrogated at the Petah Tiqva offices of the Natioanl Unit for Serious Crimes Investigations.

Arab Killed; Activity in Territories Updated

TA0204193794 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] A Fatah member from Khan Yunus was killed this evening as he was assembling a bomb in the Khan Yunus refugee camp. The victim is Khalid Halabi, who spent eight years in an Israeli prison because of his Fatah membership. His body was snatched away from the hospital.

Our correspondent Shlomi Eldar adds that shots were fired this evening at an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] lookout position in al-Shaykh Radwan. Nobody was hurt. The Fatah Hawks claimed responsibility for this attempted terrorist attack.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 2 April adds: "An Israeli was lightly injured in the head this evening when his car came under a hail of stones in the village of al-Jib south of Ramallah. Two border policemen were injured: one in Qalqilyah and another in Gaza.

["Riots erupted this evening in the al-Burayj refugee camp. In Gaza, an explosive charge was thrown at a police station. The charge exploded, but nobody was hurt and no damage was caused.

["A firebomb was thrown this evening at an Israeli car in the 'Aqabat Jabr refugee camp on the outskirts of Jericho. Nobody was hurt and no damage was caused. The driver reported the incident and drove away. An IDF unit arrived on the scene and found the firebomb's remnants as well as empty cartridges. Shortly afterward, an Arab suffering serious wounds arrived in a hospital in the area. The security forces are checking whether the man was the one who threw the firebomb and was wounded by shots fired by passengers aboard the Israeli car."]

Two Soldiers, 8 Arabs Wounded in Territories

TA0204153994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Two IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers were lightly injured in stone-throwing incidents in the territories today. Eight Arabs were wounded, three of them moderately: five in Hebron, and the other three in Qalqilyah, Ramallah, and Yattah.

Our correspondent points out that several locations are under curfew, including Ramallah, 'Anabta, and several refugee camps in the Ramallah and Hebron area.

IDF Reportedly Captures Three 'Terrorists'

TA0304103794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has captured three out of the four terrorists who fired shots this morning at a patrol near IDF headquarters in Gaza city. One soldier sustained light to moderate wounds in the attack while a second soldier was lightly wounded.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the four terrorists arrived in a car. The soldiers returned fire, wounding one man, who managed to escape. The other terrorists were captured. A Kalashnikov rifle used by the terrorists was found at the scene.

IDF Orders Troops: Stay Out of Strip Trouble Areas

TA0304104094 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 3 Apr 94 p 2

[Report by David Regev]

[Text] IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops in the Gaza Strip have received new orders: They are to enter refugee camps as rarely as possible, to avoid altogether entering city centers locations rife with friction, and to do their best not to harm Palestinians.

A senior Gaza Strip officer said yesterday that the troops have been instructed to intensify their patrols on the Gaza bypass road and the road to the Qatif Bloc, in order to prevent terrorist attacks. "This is the period that precedes our departure," the officer explained, "and it is a sensitive period."

The officer revealed that the evacuation of equipment and buildings from the Strip would start in the coming days. "Bases and buildings will not be handed over to the Palestinians, except for a few buildings that will be used by their police force. A special committee will coordinate the transfer of buildings."

This is how the evacuation will be carried out: First the IDF will pull out of areas controlled by Fatah, namely the PLO, and the areas will come under Palestinian command. This process will continue until only the "hottest" locations, such as the Jabalyah refugee camp,

remain under IDF control. The latter will be evacuated after Fatah is firmly established in most of the Gaza Strip. The first sites to be evacuated will be evidently Rafah and Dayr al-Balah in southern Strip.

Lake's Dual Containment Said Cause for Concern

TA0304135794 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
3 Apr 94 p B1

[Commentary by Tzvi Bar'el: "Shattering Every Myth"]

[Text] There are three ways in which U.S. national security advisers can influence the state of affairs. One, to set up a subversive body inside the administration that will secretly carry out a policy the administration publicly opposes, as John Poindexter did in the Irangate affair under President Reagan. Second, to have frightful rows with the secretary of state, as Zbigniew Brzezinski did with Cyrus Vance, and the third, to write articles in the daily or professional press, hoping the White House will read them more earnestly than internal memorandums.

Anthony Lake, President Clinton's new national security adviser, chose the third way. In an article published in FOREIGN AFFAIRS magazine, he proposes—as a sequel to his assistant Martin Indyk's article—a dual containment policy. In practical terms, this policy means that instead of pitting Iran against Iraq and vice versa, a pro-Western alliance would be formed, comprising Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, and possibly Syria, too. The alliance would be a security belt against the influence of reactionary countries.

The unveiling of the new strategy causes concern. The strategy is slightly reminiscent of Reagan's caricature world map. In that map, the world was divided into four parts: the Soviet Union and the Evil Empire; Europeans and those who do not speak our language; we, the Americans, who are the greatest; and an empty area comprised mostly of Africa. The world is simple. We will curb and eradicate the evil nations and pay off the good ones. This is what Lake is also proposing. Except that his plan, which looks enticing on paper, is potentially as dangerous as a telephone diagnosis. The United States has never clearly defined the term reactionary country. Is Saudi Arabia, which cuts off thieves' hands, reactionary, or is it perhaps a progressive state because it takes pains to restrain elements more reactionary than herself? Is Turkey a progressive state only because it is a NATO member, or is it backward because it has been massacring the Kurdish minority?

Another vague definition pertains to the term alliance. Does Lake envision a NATO-like alliance in the Middle East, in which Turkey is member but Iran is not, although the two share the same interest in restraining the Kurds and both have announced their objection to carving up Iraq? If Lake hopes that such an alliance will offset the Hizballah control of Lebanon, what will block radical Islam in Egypt, Algeria, and Sudan? And what is Israel's contribution to the war against the Islam? An

even greater danger is the possibility that establishing one pro-Western pact will immediately generate another composed of Iran and Iraq, Libya and India, Afghanistan and the rich Islamic central-Asian states of Indonesia and Malaysia. The latter alliance may engage the endorsement of China and perhaps the support of Japan, currently in a tacit economic war with the United States.

What price is the United States ready to pay today for preventing the creation of such an alliance? Is the blocking of Hizballah worth the loss of thousands of American jobs resulting from the counter-alliance's decision to boycott one single American product? The national security adviser would have done well to look up the origin of the term containment, which was invented by George Keenan, who was the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union 45 years ago. Writing in—what a surprise—FOREIGN AFFAIRS—in 1947, he suggested applying a containment policy to Stalin's USSR, but in his memoirs written twenty years later, he warned that the containment policy should not constitute a sequel to the status quo, but rather be a bridging policy toward an era in which the United States and the USSR would be able to hold an effective dialogue on how to avoid the perils of status quo. "And if the plan fails," Keenan wrote, "it will happen because of our government's inability to spot the emerging opportunities to establish an effective political dialogue, and because of its excessive preoccupation with the military aspects of the conflict."

The Arab alliance that will constitute the double containment proposed by Lake is none other but a semantic description of the current status quo. Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, and certainly Israel are considered pro-American countries. Iraq is sealed off by an international embargo anyway, and Iran is already subject to every possible American sanction, excluding a military attack. What additional containment can the United States expect? Some observers believe there is even now an opportunity to move on to the post-containment stage, to a slow resumption of relations with Iran and the gradual lifting of sanctions on Iraq.

There are indications that at least Iran is interested in resuming the ties with the United States, provided the latter stops meddling in its domestic affairs. Would it not be better if the national security adviser stopped defining existing situations and instead, probed the situation to verify that the United States was not missing another opportunity?

Poll Shows Slight Majority Supports Rabin

TA0304170294 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
3 Apr 94 p A4

[Report by media affairs correspondent 'Irit Rosenblum]

[Text] A poll conducted by the New Channel 2 Television Network shows that 50.3 percent of the public are generally satisfied with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin

while 49.7 percent are dissatisfied. The number of interviewees completely dissatisfied with the prime minister is almost double those who think Rabin's performance is very good—26.2 percent compared with 14.3 percent.

The questions which asked were: 1. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin? What grade would you give Rabin as prime minister? (very good, quite good, not so good, bad).

2. What grade would you give the prime minister for his handling of each of the following issues: advancing peace and the negotiations with the Arabs; foreign and defense policy; the economy; social welfare. (very good, quite good, not so good, bad).

The prime minister received a "very good" grade from 14.3 percent of the interviewees, "quite good" from 32.7 percent, "not so good" from 20.3 percent, "bad" from 26.2 percent. Some 6.5 percent did not have any opinion.

A total of all those with good opinions about Rabin's performance reached 50.3 percent while a total of those with negative opinions was 49.7 percent. On the issue of advancing peace and negotiations with the Arabs, 46.6 percent expressed satisfaction and 53.4 percent had a negative stand. On foreign and defense policy, 52.6 percent supported his actions and 47.4 percent rejected them. On economic issues: 49.7 percent had positive thoughts while 50.3 percent expressed negative views. On social welfare issues: 47.6 percent gave the prime minister positive grades while 52.4 percent gave him

negative grades. These data show that overall satisfaction with the prime minister is higher than when his performance is divided up into specific areas.

The poll also studied the interviewees according to changing variants. Among the women, 48.1 percent had positive views on Rabin and 51.9 percent had negative views. Among the men, 52.7 percent had positive opinions and 47.3 percent had negative views. Among young people, Rabin supporters numbered 42.9 percent and those who rejected him 57.1 percent; among middle aged people, 51.8 percent supported him and 48.2 percent opposed him; Rabin had most support among the elderly, 56.3 percent, compared with 43.7 percent who oppose him. That means that women and young people are more critical of Rabin than middle aged and elderly men.

Support for Rabin was also divided up according to geographic areas. Most of the support came from the north (Haifa, kibbutzim, Arab areas) where the rate of support was 60.4 percent and the opposition is 39.6 percent. In the center of the country, 52.8 percent supported Rabin, compared to 47.2 percent who did not; and in the south it was the opposite, 47.2 percent supported him compared to 52.8 percent who did not. Jerusalem is opposed to Rabin, according to the survey: 64.3 percent are dissatisfied compared to 35.7 percent who are satisfied (the poll apparently did not include East Jerusalem residents).

The poll encompassed a representative sample of 1,006 people, men and women from the age of 18. It was held in the second half of May 1994 through telephone interviews from the Teleser Institute in Ramat Gan. The margin of statistical error can reach 3 percent.

Al-Majali on al-'Aqabah Searches, Jerusalem

JN0204092294 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
2 Apr 94 pp 12, 13

[Interview with Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali by Sa'd al-Silawi in Amman—date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Al-Silawi] What does Jordan's decision to link its participation in the negotiations to the halting of inspections at the al-'Aqabah Port mean?

[Al-Majali] For over three years, the al-'Aqabah Port has been subjected to inspections. Jordan has been under siege. From time to time, there is a noticeable increase in the pressure being applied against Jordan. This has had a severe effect on the economic situation in the country. Unable to reach Jordan because of the harassments that take place, a large number of shipping companies stopped dealing with Jordan. Besides, the conditions that have been set regarding the arrangement of shipped cargoes and their quantities have led to an increase in insurance premiums, fees, and the cost of living in Jordan. Some cargoes have even been lost or unloaded at other ports. Their owners could not find them. All this has led to an inconvenient situation. In addition, we are suffering from a major restraint imposed on exports to Iraq, especially basic supplies. Of course, food and medicine are allowed, but there are complications. Other human supplies also face many complications. This has affected the Jordanian economy, which has for a long time been built on the basis that it is a main exporter to Iraq. When the Gulf war broke out, the blockade started. The Jordanian economy has been negatively affected. Under these circumstances and the extremely negative effect on the Jordanian economy, how can we go and negotiate within the peace process? The negotiator must feel comfortable and must have the feeling that peace brings benefits to everyone. Moreover, we have the feeling that many parties in Jordan feel and explicitly say that all these measures are aimed at twisting Jordan's arm and forcing it into a certain course of negotiations. We want this matter resolved, especially since all the inspections have not spotted a single violation.

[Al-Silawi] Mr. Prime Minister, has the decision been coordinated with the other Arab parties to the peace conference?

[Al-Majali] Among other states, Jordan is the only state that has been subjected to a blockade. Our's is a Jordanian decision. But the brothers have been in the picture. They have found this to be one of Jordan's rights.

[Al-Silawi] Therefore, the decision was made through coordination with the brothers in Syria, Egypt, and the PLO?

[Al-Majali] I cannot say so. But in view of our constant coordination, our brothers in Syria have been contacted.

[Al-Silawi] The United States says that there are discussions and proposals concerning ship inspections. What are these proposals? Will the Jordanian Government respond to them?

[Al-Majali] First, I would like to emphasize that we hide nothing. We are a committed and credible state. When we say that we import nothing that violates the UN resolutions, we mean that. But they insist on inspection. Therefore, we proposed several verification methods, including the hiring of an international firm, such as Lloyds Register, so that it would send representatives to al-'Aqabah, where they can monitor traffic and send their observations and reports to the United Nations directly. This proposal was made three months ago. As we understood, those concerned have approved the proposal. But so far, nothing has happened. On the contrary, strangely enough, the number of ships that have been inspected or intercepted this year is nearly equal to the number of all ships that have been inspected in the past years.

[Al-Silawi] But is there a specific commitment or guarantees concerning the international organization's resolutions on Iraq?

[Al-Majali] Of course, we are committed. We are a UN member country. We respect and implement its resolutions. This is a moral commitment. The picture should be clear. How can we not be committed to an organization in which we are a member?

[Al-Silawi] Mr. Prime Minister, can you give us the losses in figures resulting from the inspection operations?

[Al-Majali] These losses range from \$300 to \$400 million a year. Total losses so far have reached \$1.3 billion. For the Jordanian economy, this is a very sizable loss.

[Al-Silawi] Reports in the Israeli press say there is a project to widen the Jordan River to benefit from its waters, and that Jordanian firms will carry out this operation. Is this true? What do you have to say about this?

[Al-Majali] I do not have any information on this. This is the first time I've heard of such a thing. However, from a quick review of the issue, I do not see any justification for this. What little what there is in the Jordan River is mineralized. The Israeli authorities are pumping this mineral water to purify the Tiberias Lake waters.

[Al-Silawi] Mr. Prime Minister, as journalists we feel that there is a missing link. Sometimes, we cannot understand what the government wants. For example, when we speak about the issue of Jerusalem, we do not know how to translate the state's stand on the Jerusalem issue. What are the terms of reference? We understand that only God's authority should prevail at holy places. So far, we do not understand what the government wants. What are the state's policies on these issues? There is a missing link.

[Al-Majali] There is no missing link. The problem is that journalists do not carry out indepth studies. They do not come to us about these issues. But, since you have asked this question, I will answer you: When his majesty the king says that sovereignty over Jerusalem and the holy places belongs only to God, this is clear. He does not say sovereignty belongs to him, but to God. The Islamic quarters should meet and study how to achieve this, that is, sovereignty is not for Israel, which in its religious books and propaganda says Jerusalem belongs to it and that it enjoys sovereignty over it. When we say to the world at large that sovereignty belongs to God almighty, this is to emphasize that sovereignty does not belong to Israel but to god, and that we have to sit down and discuss this issue.

One other thing we should not forget is that Jerusalem falls under the 1947 partition. The city and its environs are areas that were given to an international administration that did not materialize. Israel occupied the western part. There was the Jordanian presence in the eastern part. There were two parts. Western policies see it as a unified city. Most countries still do not recognize Israel's sovereignty over the occupied eastern part of Jerusalem. That's why these countries, including the United States, have no embassies there.

[Al-Silawi] Jordan has asked for a clarification from the United States concerning Resolution 904. This resolution is crucial if we realize that the U.S. Congress, which is controlled by the Democrats, had in the past asked that Jerusalem be the capital of Israel.

[Al-Majali] The United States did not recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Even so, President Bill Clinton said during the election campaign that he would transfer the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem if it did not constitute an obstacle to peace. The fact is, this is an obstacle to peace. This is something we should know.

[Al-Silawi] Mr. Prime Minister, are there Jordanian-U.S. contacts on this resolution?

[Al-Majali] Contacts on this resolution and others are under way. His majesty the king's intervention was very clear that the United States should not veto this resolution. This also should be taken into consideration.

[Al-Silawi] Mr. Prime Minister, this issue might have created a disagreement between the PLO and Jordan.

[Al-Majali] The brothers in the PLO placed the issue of Jerusalem in the resolution with good intentions. They believe Jerusalem should be Arab. We also believe it should be Arab. But, the question is when to raise such an issue and in which resolution. This is our viewpoint. It was feared that the manner with which it was introduced would lead to removing it. Thus, things would become worse, or it would have been vetoed. This would have been very bad. The safest and the less damaging stand was that the United States abstained on the paragraph on Jerusalem. But, the resolution as a whole was adopted by the UN Security Council members. The

deliberations took place and there was success. However, we do not wish to place the issue of Jerusalem where it could be affected. [passage omitted]

Al-Majali: Syria Informed of al-'Aqabah-Talks Link

JN0204083194 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
2 Apr 94 p 1

["Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Sa'id Silawi]

[Text] Amman—Prime Minister 'Abd al-Salam al-Majali said Friday [1 April] the government was considering a proposal to exempt the first JD [Jordanian Dinar] 5,000-JD6,000 of individual income from income tax.

In an interview with AL-RA'y and the JORDAN TIMES, Dr. al-Majali said the government was reconsidering a number of laws, including the law on encouragement of investments with a view to ending cutting down bureaucracy and facilitating procedures to attract more investments. [sentence as published]

On criticism levelled against official media, the prime minister said the Ministry of Information had worked out a strategy which was adopted last year, but since the minister was replaced and the new minister had been heavily preoccupied with important issues, the official media has looked as if they were lagging behind. He noted that the information strategy needs people who believe in it in order to translate it into reality on the ground.

The prime minister said Jordanian press had developed tremendously and stressed that the government did not exploit its ownership of newspapers' shares to influence the freedom of opinion or expression.

Dr. al-Majali said the government plans to introduce elected district councils in its efforts to decentralise work at governorate and district levels.

"Decentralisation will turn us into a very advanced state," the prime minister said.

On the al-'Aqabah siege, Dr. al-Majali said Jordan had informed Syria of its decision to stay away from Arab-Israeli peace talks until the siege on Aqaba is lifted. Dr. al-Majali said the siege undermines peace, adding that "one cannot talk peace at a time when he is besieged."

On United Nations Security Council Resolution 904 on the Hebron massacre, Dr. al-Majali reiterated Jordan's firm position towards Jerusalem.

"Sovereignty on Jerusalem will only be of God's, and not of Israel's, he said. [punctuation as published]

The United states has not recognised Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, Dr. al-Majali said. The inclusion by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), of Jerusalem

in Resolution 904 was done in good intention because "we and the PLO believe in the Arab identity of Jerusalem."

Washington Talks on Ship Searches Postponed

JN0304105894 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
3 Apr 94 p 1

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Jordanian officials said on Saturday [2 April] a Washington meeting of top U.S. bodies in charge of searches of ships heading to the Kingdom had been postponed until next week.

The meeting to review the searches aimed at goods that might be transhipped to Iraq, initially had been scheduled to be held at the State Department on Thursday, Reuter said.

It has been delayed until next Wednesday to allow more time to study a three-month-old Jordanian proposal to replace offshore with onshore inspections by a third party.

His Majesty King Husayn said Monday Jordan would not resume peace talks with Israel if the disruptive searches by U.S.-led navies enforcing U.N. trade sanctions against Iraq continued.

Officials say the inspection has been tightened recently to pressure Jordan into signing a peace deal with Israel.

Under the proposal expected to be discussed by U.S. officials on Wednesday, the sea-based inspection by the U.S.-led forces will be moved to the port of al-'Aqabah.

Information Minister Jawad al-'Anani said Tuesday that Jordan felt that the proposal was not given the proper attention it deserved since enough time had passed for studying the proposal but no action had been taken.

A group of Jordanian officials, businessmen and shipping agents held a televised debate last week with the secretary of the U.N. Sanctions Committee. They explained the negative impact of the sanctions enforcement in its present form on Jordan's economy. The Sanctions Committee official promised that the Kingdom's grievances will be placed before the committee.

Envoy to U.S. Cited on Meeting Delay

JN0304110794 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
3 Apr 94 p 25

[By Caroline Faraj in Amman]

[Text] Jordanian ambassador in Washington Fayiz al-Tarawinah has stated that U.S. officials assured him that the reasons for postponing the expanded meeting scheduled for last Thursday [31 March] among representatives of various U.S. Government departments and bodies concerned with foreign affairs to discuss available options concerning the naval inspection of ships bound for al-'Aqabah port are purely technical and that the meeting is expected to be held next week.

In a statement to AL-RA'Y by telephone from Washington, al-Tarawinah said that senior U.S. Administration officials have understood with complete seriousness [tafahhamu bijiddiyah tammah] his majesty's stand as expressed during his meeting with ambassadors of the permanent member states on the Security Council on the current blockade on al-'Aqabah and that the situation was very clear to everybody.

During his meetings and contacts with a number of U.S. officials, al-Tarawinah asserted that Jordan's position on the al-'Aqabah blockade stems from its being an extremely sensitive political issue and not a procedural or bureaucratic matter.

He said that some officials gave him to understand that next week's meeting at the State Department to make a decision on al-'Aqabah blockade is expected to be in Jordan's interest.

A State Department official said recently that the meeting was postponed until next week for reasons connected with revision of schedules and times convenient to representatives of U.S. departments and bodies concerned with foreign affairs.

It is worth mentioning that Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for cabinet affairs and Information minister, told a news conference last Tuesday [29 March] that Jordan had proposed that a neutral technical committee, such as the Lloyds company, might inspect the ships upon docking at al-'Aqabah port.

Paper Reports al-'Aqaba-Bound Ship Denied Entry

JN0404100294 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
4 Apr 94 pp 1, 10

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—The U.S.-led naval task force patrolling the Red Sea on Saturday [2 April] turned back an al-'Aqaba-bound ship carrying animal feed for a Jordanian importer, shipping agents said Sunday.

The Dolphins I was turned back amid the countdown to a meeting this week in Washington where American officials are expected to discuss a three month-old proposal to replace sea-based inspections by the U.S.-led force with onshore checks by a neutral international agency.

His Majesty King Husayn said Monday that Jordan required a satisfactory solution to the siege of al-'Aqabah in order to continue playing a positive role in the peace process.

The increased international attention on the blockade of the Red Sea port has also brought sharp focus on the very legality of the inspections. Businessmen said that they had learnt that the interception of al-'Aqabah-bound vessels was a self-assumed task of the U.S. with no coordination with the U.N. Sanctions Committee.

T. Gharghur and Fils, agents of Dolphins 1, said in a letter to the minister of finance that the vessel, which was carrying nearly 4,000 tonnes of soya bean meal—animal feed—was intercepted at the Tiran Straits in the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba on Friday.

After two inspections of the St. Vincent-flagged ship, inspectors aboard the U.S. frigate which intercepted the Dolphins 1 ruled that they did not have accessibility to inspect the lower holds where the Jordan-bound cargo was stowed and therefore could not allow it to proceed to al-'Aqabah.

All the papers related to the consignment were in order and were produced to the inspectors, including details of the consignee, but the inspectors insisted that they should be able to check the bagged cargo, said a spokesman for the agents.

The Dolphin 1, which was running out of fuel, could not stay around in the straits and headed for Port Suez where the cargo could be rearranged to satisfy the inspectors before returning to the Tiran Straits, the agents said.

The process is expected to cost several thousand dollars to the importer.

No official comment was immediately available. But the interception was certain to fuel fears that the Kingdom's repeated complaints over the negative impact of Red Sea inspection methods on its economy have gone unheeded except for repeated American promises that they would be looked into.

Meanwhile, Jordanians who met with a visiting U.N. Sanctions Committee official last week said they understood that the committee had nothing to do with the actual inspections and was not kept informed of what is going on in the Red Sea.

"We were amazed to get the distinct impression that the inspections are a self-assumed task of the U.S. and there was little communication, let alone coordination, between the enforcers of the sanctions and the committee," said one of those who met with Jhiang Zhang Wan, secretary of the sanctions panel, which includes representatives of all the 15 members of the Security Council.

"We could not but reach a conclusion that the U.S. is mostly trying unilaterally to cater to the desires of some of the Gulf states by maintaining the sanctions on Iraq and also pressure on Jordan," said the Jordanian, who declined to be identified further.

The Jordanian government has filed several memos with the Sanctions Committee raising this particular point, but no action had been adopted, diplomats said.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said last week that he was looking for ways to ease the impact the embargo against Iraq is having on Jordan.

"We're certainly working on that," Mr. Christopher said. "We'd like to find some way to ease the burden on

Jordan of these inspections... we recognise the pressure on Jordan and the disadvantages to Jordan's economy."

The U.S. has always maintained that it has Security Council authorisation to enforce the sanctions which the world body imposed in August 1990 following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Legal experts have questioned this assertion, however.

'Ali al-Dumur, head of the Jordanian Jurists Association, said: "Legally there is a grey area between what the U.S. claims as the authorisation it has from the Security Council and the actual modality of enforcing the sanctions."

"But in reality there is no such formal authorisation and the enforcement of the sanctions and the interception of al-'Aqabah-bound vessels were adopted by the U.S. in its own interpretation of how to monitor respect for the sanctions," Mr. al-Dumur told the JORDAN TIMES.

Despite the argument, it is unlikely that any bid to challenge the American assertion will be entertained in the U.S.-dominated Security Council, observers say.

"But that does not mean that we should shut up and put up with whatever way the U.S. wants to deal with us," said the Jordanian who attended the meeting with the Sanctions Committee official.

A European diplomat said: "Jordanian patience has to be commended since (the Kingdom) put up with the status quo for more than three years before deciding that enough was enough and took a firm position."

"I think most of the European countries support the Jordanian stand although it is not yet clear what individual governments would do to help the Kingdom," added the diplomat.

So far, only France, whose ships often participate in the U.S.-led force patrolling the Red Sea, has publicly said that it supported the Jordanian position and that an urgent solution to the siege of al-'Aqabah had to be found.

Papers Demand U.S. Lift 'Siege' of al-'Aqabah

U.S. Must Move From 'Sweet Words'

JN0204094894 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic
2 Apr 94 p 17

[Editorial: "The U.S. Acknowledgement and the Required Practical Steps"]

[Text] Through its secretary of state, the United States has reiterated the acknowledgement that the unfair siege to which the Port of al-'Aqabah has been subjected for some time has damaged and pressured Jordan and its economy.

Certainly, such an acknowledgement does not relieve the U.S. Administration of its prime responsibility for the

outcome of this siege of Jordan's only port. It even doubles the U.S. responsibility for this siege, because the U.S. Navy is the party that carries out acts of harassment and inspection, and because the U.S. Administration is the party that controls the international decision that is supposed to be made to end Jordan's suffering and the pressures on it as a result of this unfair siege.

By addressing this message directly to those concerned and by dotting the i's and crossing the t's by requesting the parties concerned to halt their pressure and lift the siege, Jordan is asking each party to assume its responsibility if this part of the world is to be stable and if peace based on justice, comprehensiveness, and durability is to be established.

Jordan has never failed to comply with international norms and laws. Likewise, it has never departed from its policy on abiding by the UN resolutions. In return, the international community is supposed to champion Jordan's just demands by safeguarding its legitimate rights, understanding its constructive pan-Arab and regional role, and fairly examining the burdens Jordan is shouldering due to its position in the center of a region rocked by catastrophes and events due to international reasons, regional interpretations, and continued Israeli aggression after the Zionist entity was established on the land of Palestine.

Having realized that it is mainly behind many of the reasons for the suffering Jordan is facing and for the repercussions Jordan is enduring, the United States must move from sweet words that indicate it is aware of Jordan's suffering as a result of the siege to making a decision. Such a decision should not only lift the unfair embargo, but should also prove, by deeds, that the U.S. Administration is in the process of addressing the repercussions resulting from the series of injuries and mistakes committed against this country. Everyone should be confident that Jordan will not yield to pressure, change its positions, or relinquish its constant principles to suit circumstances or occasions.

Lifting 'Siege' Required Before Peace Talks

JN0304115994 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic
3 Apr 94 pp 1, 20

[Unattributed editorial: "Lifting the Blockade on Jordan Before Resuming the Negotiations"]

[Text] The fast response shown by France and Japan to the Jordanian demand that the blockade imposed on Jordan be addressed reflects the international community's respect and appreciation for Jordan, especially since the concerned UN committee, which is discussing how to address this blockade, has acknowledged the great damage inflicted on the Jordanian economy and trade. This committee also acknowledged Jordan's commitment to the resolutions of international legitimacy.

His Majesty King Husayn raised this issue with courage and convincing objectivity, and demanded that it be

addressed quickly. Reactions have clearly shown that the U.S. Administration has been most instrumental in maintaining the blockade on Jordan and even in a more painful and harmful manner.

King Husayn pointed out that Jordan's principled position on the peace process and its insistence on resolving the issues of the occupied territories, water, the refugees and the displaced, and other issues before signing any agreement with Israel had annoyed the U.S. Administration, so it practiced various pressures and harassments against Jordan in order to force it to yield to its will and sign with Israel the agreement which this administration wants.

King Husayn, however, was well aware of this maneuver and announced that Jordan's continued participation in the peace process hinges on lifting the unfair U.S. siege on al-'Aqabah. Now that Washington has promised to address the situation and that U.S. Secretary of State Christopher intends to make a new regional tour in the next two weeks and visit Jordan to discuss the resumption of negotiations with Israel, the U.S. Administration should seriously take the Jordanian position into consideration. Jordan is sustaining grave losses as a result of this unfair siege on al-'Aqabah. It is inconceivable for Jordan to negotiate the achievement of peace in the region at a time when it is besieged and encircled without any convincing reasons or justifications.

It is important for the U.S. Administration to learn that Jordan insists on ending this injustice resulting from the U.S. blockade before talking with Christopher on resuming the negotiations and before talking about peace.

'Cruel Tool of Pressure' Assailed

JN0304125594 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
3 Apr 94 p 4

[Unattributed editorial: "Pressure With No Name"]

[Text] There is no doubt that Jordan is being subjected to tremendous pressures from regional and big powers to fall into line with new arrangements in the Middle East, especially a full peace based on the dictates of Israel. That pressure is being manifested in many ways. In one, Israel wants Jordan to sign a peace treaty without settling the thorny issues of land, water and refugees. Unless our borders with Israel and Palestine are demarcated and fixed there cannot be progress; and unless the issues of water and refugees are solved to the satisfaction of all parties no peace treaty can stand the test of time. Palestinian refugees in Jordan, who number no less than 30 per cent of the population, will turn into a destabilising factor to the country's security unless and until their plight is solved once and for all.

As far as water is concerned, Jordan's population, which is growing at about three per cent annually, is already running short of it but due mainly to the uneven sharing of the water resources with Israel.

In another way, the U.S., which seems to be all the time going along with whatever policies Israel advocates, is putting pressure on Jordan on at least two fronts. The first is the naval blockade against al-'Aqabah, and the second is in the realm of Jordan-Arab relations. On the first count, Jordan can only see the blockade as a punishment for Jordan's position during the Gulf crisis. Since only al-'Aqabah-bound traffic in the whole of the Near East and the East Mediterranean region is being checked, the U.S. cannot continue to claim that it is merely enforcing the regime of sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council against Iraq. Jordan is right to ask whether the same is being applied to goods destined to Iraq through Syria, Turkey or Iran. The blockade against al-'Aqabah can only be interpreted as a cruel tool of pressure on Jordan mandated by Israel and implemented, with arrogance, by the U.S. and its erstwhile allies in the Gulf war.

On the Arab front, Jordan cannot understand why it is being boycotted by other Arab states in the region, especially Saudi Arabia. Jordan has proven it had nothing to do with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, its position on foreign intervention in the crisis has been vindicated. Some Arab members of the 30-nation U.S.-led coalition that fought against Iraq are admitting that the whole treatment of the conflict was a sham. Perhaps because the Saudi leadership knows very well that the Saudi people themselves were against foreign intervention, King Fahd has decided not to "forgive" Jordan for pointing to that since the very beginning of the crisis.

The prime minister, Dr. 'Abd al-Salam al-Majali, said recently that the West was not contributing as much as it could to Jordan's attempts to mend fences with the Saudis.

Well, if the U.S. truly cannot help that cause, Washington can at least show goodwill by lifting the al-'Aqabah siege right away. Good intentions by the Americans, translated into a practical gesture this time, will not only help boost U.S. standing among Jordanians, it will also serve America's best interests in the region.

Al-'Aqabah 'Siege' U.S. Service for Israel

JN0404125794 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
4 Apr 94 p 30

["Opinions" column: "Why the Siege on the Port of al-'Aqabah," by Mikha'il Jumay'an]

[Text] Anyone following the accelerating events in the world and the Middle East, particularly after the United States became the sole party that dominates the world and controls the resources of the Third World states and peoples, and also after the UN Security Council came under U.S. sovereignty and after the United States made the Security Council peddle its policies, carry out its orders, and achieve its numerous interests in the world, he will paradoxically discover that there is no special U.S. interest in imposing its authority on al-'Aqabah;

rather, the United States wants to serve Israeli interests and make Israel the strongest state in the region.

To achieve this, the United States found in imposing a strict and firm siege on the port of al-'Aqabah a way to humiliate, pressure, and force Jordan into signing a separate peace agreement with Israel, which Jordan rejects in part and parcel.

Jordan has frequently reiterated that it rejects separate and partial solutions because these are not among its policies. Jordan also said that the siege imposed by the U.S. Navy on its sole port will not intimidate it, and that it absolutely rejects this siege because it harms Jordan's national sovereignty, dignity, and reputation. His Majesty King Husayn asserted that Jordan's resumption of its role in the peace process hinges on lifting the siege on the port of al-'Aqabah and immediately addressing this totally unacceptable issue in a new way.

This siege has inflicted huge costs and grave economic losses on Jordanian importers and merchants. Hence, both the Jordanian merchants and citizens sustain these losses as a result of searching the ships carrying Jordan-bound merchandise on the high sea rather than on the dock at al-'Aqabah port and also as a result of diverting these ships to ports other than the port of al-'Aqabah. This doubles the expenses and delays the transfer of merchandise to their owners for several months. This constitutes a service for Israel, the strategic ally of the United States, and achieves Israel's objectives and expansionist and settlement schemes in Palestine and the Arab homeland.

The visible practices on the ground since 1948 and the series of vetoes which the United States used at the Security Council and in other international institutions constitute a service for Israel, especially since the United States turns a blind eye to the series of hideous crimes and massacres committed by the Israeli Army and settlers, beginning with the Dayr Yasin, Qibyah, and Sabra and Shatila massacres.

The United States is still pressuring Jordan and other Arab states to lift the boycott of Israel, focusing particularly on Jordan because it is the most important state in the region and because of its stand on the Gulf war and its demand to find an Arab solution to the Gulf crisis.

The United States has recently intensified its pressures on Jordan due to the latter's position on Jerusalem and its dissatisfaction with inserting the Jerusalem issue in Resolution 904 because Jerusalem was marginally mentioned in it and because this resolution did not address the substantive issues pertaining to Jerusalem in its capacity as being part of the occupied Arab territories.

Moreover, Resolution 904 raised the Jewish voices calling for making Jerusalem Israel's eternal capital, knowing that Muslims are the ones most entitled to protect the holy places because Islam acknowledges both Judaism and Christianity as it came after these two

religions. Jerusalem is also a dear city for the Hashemites, Muslims, and all Arabs, including Christian Arabs. It is the place from which Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven and the cradle of Jesus Christ, so protecting it is an Arab and Islamic right that cannot be relinquished no matter how dear the price may be.

Russian Role Sought in Lifting 'Siege'

JN0404083194 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic
4 Apr 94 pp 1, 18

[Unattributed Editorial: "We Welcome the Russian Initiative"]

[Text] We greatly welcome the visit by Russian President Yeltsin's envoy and any step or initiative designed to enhance bilateral relations and activate the peace process, especially since Russia, along with the United States, is cosponsoring the peace process on all tracks.

Now that friendly Russia, which is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, is eager to activate the peace process, we hope it will take into account Jordan's bitter suffering as a result of the U.S. siege imposed on al-'Aqabah. This siege has inflicted grave losses on the Jordanian economy and trade.

Friendly Russia knows better than others the extent of Jordan's eagerness to achieve peace, security, and stability in this vital region of the world. At the same time, Russia knows that Jordan has recently linked the resumption of its role in the peace process to addressing this unfair siege.

We thus hope that this friendly big power will give serious attention to this siege of the port of al-'Aqabah and work to lift it. What draws attention is that while President Yeltsin's envoy was visiting Jordan, the U.S. forces twice searched a ship carrying Jordan-bound merchandise and turned it back to Suez. Such a position does not serve the peace process in any way whatsoever.

Jordan experienced much suffering and many economic and trade difficulties during the Gulf crisis and the second Gulf war. It is still suffering as a result of this siege which is imposed unfairly and without any convincing justification. Jordan complied with the Security Council resolutions, and the U.S. Administration itself acknowledged this compliance. This administration, however, insists on harming our national economy.

It is known that Jordan is not the only neighbor of Iraq. Washington, however, did not impose a similar blockade on Turkey and Iran, which are also neighbors of Iraq. At any rate, we hope that the guest Russian envoy will brief President Yeltsin on Jordan's suffering as a result of the unfair siege in order to address this issue.

It is inconceivable to activate the peace process in order to achieve peace, security, and stability in a region where some countries are suffering from an unfair siege at the hands of peace advocates.

King Receives Message on Russian Role in Peace

JN0304180994 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received Igor Ivanov, deputy Russian foreign minister and envoy of the Russian leadership to the region at the Royal Hashemite Court today. The meeting was attended by Crown Prince Hasan.

The envoy conveyed a message to his majesty from Russian President Boris Yeltsin dealing with the role that Russia can play in the peace process in its capacity as one of the cosponsors of the peace process, as well as its role in realizing security, stability, and prosperity in the region.

His majesty King Husayn emphasized the constant Jordanian position on the peace process, represented in the call for enabling the Palestinian people to attain their rights on their national soil, and to realize lasting, just, and comprehensive peace in the region.

PLO's al-Husayni Visits, Urges Maximum Coordination

JN0304074194 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian team to the peace negotiations, has called for setting up a joint Jordanian-Palestinian committee in permanent session as an alternative to occasional visits and periodic meetings. The task of such a committee would be to specify, in detail, the frameworks, form, and extent of joint cooperation.

In an exclusive interview with the Jordanian news agency on arriving in Amman en route to occupied Jerusalem tonight, al-Husayni added that Jordanian-Palestinian coordination should be at the highest levels and that all details should be discussed. He said: If we do not proceed in this direction, the Israelis will seek to isolate the Palestinians in order to move the occupied territories from the Israeli occupation to limited self-rule. To prevent Israel from achieving this objective, Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation should be enhanced.

Al-Husayni asserted that the current phase requires maximum coordination. Palestinian-Israeli relations have reached a phase in which Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is an inevitable necessity. Without such coordination, we would give Israel an opportunity to tamper with our cause and plan and make whatever decisions it pleases, he said.

Al-Husayni added that Palestinian-Jordanian coordination should bring us to the point where the Jordanian and Palestinian sides would be almost one party. He asserted that the Israeli settlements should be removed, and that there is no room for the settlers in the occupied territories because they are an obstacle to peace. He added that he visited London and Paris where he held

talks with several officials dealing with the Palestine question and European support for the Palestinian people. He also met with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat in Tunis.

Al-Husayni, al-Majali Hold Meeting

JN0304170194 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, hailed the great efforts and continuous support Jordan has extended and is extending to the current restoration works of the Dome of the Rock.

He added: What has been achieved there so far is considered a very great accomplishment which has rescued the Dome of the Rock. We can only express our thanks and gratitude to Jordan for what it has done in this field.

In a press statement after meeting with Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali at the Prime Ministry today, al-Husayni emphasized the importance of the Jordanian role and the support the Jordanian Government extends for the efforts of the religious establishments in Jerusalem in order to protect the holy shrines there.

He said it was agreed that the Islamic Awqaf Establishment will shoulder full responsibility for restoration actions in the holy al-Aqsa Mosque and the al-Ibrahimi Mosque.

He said the enormity of the events and the circumstances surrounding us require us to boost current coordination to reach the level expected from us during the next stage.

He added that during his meeting with Dr. al-Majali, which was also attended by Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for cabinet affairs and information minister, and the Palestinian ambassador in Amman, he discussed several issues, including Jerusalem. Great emphasis was placed on this subject and on concentrating on bilateral coordination concerning this important subject.

Answering a question by the Jordanian news agency on the Cairo agreement, which the PLO and Israel recently signed, al-Husayni said: Expediting Israeli withdrawal and starting to implement the agreement will undoubtedly be a step forward, and we hope that Israel will apply the agreement in a manner that serves the spirit of the agreement.

On the international observers who will be deployed in Hebron, and whether their number is enough to protect the population of this city, al-Husayni said that what is enough to protect the population in Hebron is an Israeli withdrawal and the uprooting of the Israeli settlements in the area. He added the international presence is something new that will undoubtedly serve the Palestinian position, and that although it is not enough to protect the Palestinians, it will be an assisting factor.

The meeting discussed in detail the situation in Jerusalem and the need to preserve its Arab character, as well as the restoration works on of the Dome of the Rock and the holy al-Aqsa Mosque.

At the meeting, it was agreed that the subject of Jerusalem is one of the most important issues, therefore, the two sides emphasized the need to activate the Jerusalem Committee that Jordan and the PLO had agreed to set up within the framework of comprehensive coordination between Jordan and the PLO.

Al-'Anani: Hebron Agreement 'Positive Step'

JN0204155694 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Excerpt] The Council of Ministers held a session today chaired by Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali. The council reviewed the agreement signed in Cairo recently between the PLO and Israel regarding the security of Hebron, as well as the broad outlines in the agreement regarding the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement.

Following the session, Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for Prime Ministry affairs and minister of information, told the Jordanian news agency that the government considers this agreement a positive step on the road to a comprehensive peaceful solution that leads to the restoration of the basic rights of the Palestinian Arab people on their national soil and territory.

Dr. al-'Anani added that the Council of Ministers asserted that the security measures agreed upon between the PLO and Israel, namely, the temporary deployment of international observers from Norway, Denmark, and Italy, will contribute to the protection of the city and its holy sites, since these sites are part of Arab and Islamic heritage. This is in addition to the right of citizens to worship without any restrictions.

Dr. al-'Anani said that as a result of the massacre committed by the settlers in Hebron and the consequent martyrdom and injury of dozens of people in the city, the Jordanian Government asserts that the security measures will not be complete unless the Israeli Government evacuates the Israeli settlers from the city of Hebron. This is meant to return basic rights, after settlements were established in the city, and so as to prevent a repeat of the acts of violence that have claimed the lives of innocent Palestinians.

Dr. al-'Anani said the PLO is about to undertake major responsibilities in light of the expected developments—the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, and the PLO's takeover of the territory from which Israel is going to withdraw. The government would like to express its support for the PLO so that it will be strengthened and so that can assume its responsibilities in the best possible manner so as to restore the rest of the

occupied Palestinian territories and so that the Palestinian people can attain their rights in full. [passage omitted]

PLO-Israel Security Accord Seen as 'Not Enough'

JN0104095994 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 1 Apr 94 p 1

[Editorial: "Insufficient Step"]

[Text] After yesterday's Cairo agreement between the PLO and Israel to deploy a temporary international presence in Hebron, and then to resume self-rule negotiations on Monday [4 April], the Israeli authorities began, as usual, to belittle the importance of this step, considered the first of its kind since Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israeli officials began to stress that Hebron sovereignty is Israel's alone and that this step was taken to calm the situation and explore efforts to bring life back to normal.

It seems Israeli acceptance of this step has three objectives. The first is to bring the Palestinian party back to the table of self-rule negotiations in order to implement the Gaza-Jericho First accord. The Palestinian and Israeli delegations began negotiations immediately after signing the agreement. The second objective is to absorb the vengeance and anger of Palestinian citizens in Hebron and the occupied Arab territories in the wake of the massacre and the consequent killing, terrorism, and siege. The third objective is to mislead world public opinion and circumvent the world protest that accompanied and followed the massacre in the holy al-Ibrahimi Mosque and, since then, the continuing coercion.

Despite its importance and significance, this step is not enough to prevent more massacres, terrorism, and deliberate killing in the Hebron area, Jerusalem, and the occupied Arab territories. This will be especially true as long as the occupied territories are planted with settlements and as long as the Israeli Government is providing weapons, support, and protection for the settlers, and even considers them a complementary part of its political and security policy.

What happened in Hebron happened before in Jerusalem, 'Ayn Qara, Dayr Yasin, Qibya, and in Gaza, a few days ago. There are plenty of examples. It is likely to happen again anywhere, any time. The Zionist objective has not changed, namely, land without people.

What is really needed to end the attacks on defenseless citizens is eliminating the settlements, ousting the settlers from inside and outside Hebron and from the occupied territories, and providing real and effective international protection for the Palestinian people, paving the way to the end of the occupation.

Paper Rejects 'Lame' Palestinian-Israeli Agreement

JN0204103694 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic
2 Apr 94 pp 1, 20

[Unattributed editorial: A Lame Agreement That Does Not Guarantee Protection for the Hebron Inhabitants"]

[Text] The recent Palestinian-Israeli agreement on Hebron's security is an impotent and lame agreement. It cannot guarantee the protection of Hebron's inhabitants from settlers or occupation troops. An international protection force that does not have a deterrent weapon, even to defend itself, cannot protect Palestinian citizens from settler terrorism and occupation troop bullets.

The alleged Israeli withdrawal will be nothing more than a redeployment of Israeli forces. They will still be able to interfere and kill Arab citizens at any moment. It is inconceivable that the international protection force will be confined to only one of many occupied Palestinian cities and that its inhabitants will be left subject to continued Israeli attacks that are escalating in a flagrant brutal manner.

Wide popular and official Palestinian and Arab circles have criticized the recent Palestinian-Israeli agreement. They regarded it as a result of tough Israeli and U.S. pressure on the Palestinian side. What draws our attention is the fact that the agreement between Israel and the Palestinian leadership has not affected the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in any way whatsoever, nor has it reduced escalating Israeli campaigns of terrorism, repression, and killing of Arab citizens. It has not limited mass arrest campaigns among the sons of Palestine.

Numerous Palestinian martyrs and wounded Palestinians fall every day at the hands of Israeli occupation authorities. The Palestinian police will deploy in Gaza and Jericho this week, according to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. This police force will be linked to the occupation authorities and under their supervision and orders. It is feared that this force will become a tool of repression against the inhabitants of Gaza and Jericho and strike at the glorious intifadah there. If this occurs, the Palestinian people will have lost a strong bargaining chip.

The Palestinian leadership's involvement in signing the recent agreement with Israel only gave vent to a wave of Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic wrath triggered by the massacre at the holy al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. No doubt, Israel's isolation of the Palestinian leadership in the absence of Arab coordination has led to such tragic results.

Omani State Minister Arrives in Amman for Talks

JN3103210894 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 31 Mar 94

[Text] This evening, Mr. Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Oman's minister of state for foreign affairs, arrived in Amman on a two-day visit to Jordan. He will convey a message from His Majesty Sultan Qabus to His Majesty King Husayn. He will also have talks with Jordanian officials dealing with bilateral ties and Arab and world issues.

On hand to welcome him were Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs; the secretary general of the Foreign Ministry; and the Omani ambassador in Amman.

Omani Source: Talks Centered on Yemen

JN0104144794 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] An authoritative source has told the Omani News Agency correspondent in Amman that talks held with Jordanian officials in Amman by Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, the minister of state for foreign affairs, centered on the Yemeni issue and the Omani-Jordanian efforts to preserve Yemeni unity.

Speaking at the conclusion of Bin-'Alawi's visit to Jordan today, the source said that Oman and Jordan will support all Arab efforts to promote Yemen's interests based on the principles and guidelines of the pledge and accord agreement signed by the various Yemeni groups in Amman last February through the joint Jordanian-Omani good offices.

Concluding his statement, the source said that the Omani-Jordanian contacts will continue to follow the Yemeni issue as long as the Yemeni brothers remain in need of backing and support from Oman and Jordan.

Italian Killed, 10 Injured in Hotel Fire

JN0404073294 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0700 GMT 4 Apr 94

[Text] One person died and 10 others were injured in a limited fire that broke out this morning at the Forte

Grand Hotel. Civil Defense teams arrived at the scene within minutes and managed to bring the fire under control and evacuate occupants in record time not exceeding several minutes.

Colonel Mahmud Ahmad al-'Abbadi, assistant director of the Civil Defense for operations, said the person who died is Italian. Those injured were suffering from broken limbs, smoke inhalation, and minor burns.

Amman Land Day Rally Ends in 'Fistfight'

JN3103185594 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 31 Mar 94 p 25

[Report by 'Awdah 'Awdah in Amman]

[Text] Gathered by Land Day and dispersed by the peace process. A rally organized by the intifadah committee of the engineers association at the al-Rashid hall in the professional unions' complex last night to celebrate the 18th anniversary of Land Day had to end prematurely because of differences between those who supported and those who opposed a peace march among attendees.

Only 30 minutes into the rally, and with only two of the five scheduled speakers heard, a row broke out between those who support and those who opposed the peace process. The altercation began with the raising of slogans and shouts and ended with a fistfight and the throwing of chairs. The fight ended after a few minutes and there were no casualties.

The master of ceremonies, Muhammad Abu-Taha, exerted great but unsuccessful efforts to continue the rally but the audience started leaving the hall through doors and windows.

The rally was addressed by Muhammad Nayil 'Ubaydat, doyen of the dentists association, and Muhammad al-A'raj, known also as Abu-al-Ra'id, one of the founders of the Fatah Movement. Taysir Khalid, member of the PLO Executive committee and a Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine official; Muhammad Nazzal, Hamas representative in Jordan; and Ahmad Nawfal, a professor at the University of Jordan, had no chance to deliver their speeches at this important annual event.

This is the first time the intifadah anniversary celebration has failed since the beginning of these celebrations 18 years ago.

Minister: Church Bombers Fled to Israel, Australia

NC0104181094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul has disclosed that all those involved in the bombing of the Sayyidat al-Najat Church carry more than three passports. Some of them, he added, fled to the border strip and from there to Israel and then Australia. He added: The judiciary will decide on the matter; investigations continue and those found to be involved will be taken to court, regardless of who they may be. He added: We will not cover up for anybody and our judiciary is independent. The judicial investigator issues arrest warrants and instructs the security agencies to apprehend the suspects, he said.

He noted that the new press law will give the press more freedoms and will restrict the arbitrary questioning of journalists as well as the suspension of a paper before a trial is held. He stressed the need to organize the audio-visual media, which are a legacy of the war and which continue to operate from a militia-minded point of view.

Minister Dallul's remarks came in an interview with the Kuwaiti paper AL-QABAS. [passage omitted]

Concerning the defendants who participated in blowing up the Sayyidat al-Najat Church and who are abroad, Minister Dallul pointed out that the defendants currently in custody had made confessions and admitted that each participant carried more than three passports. He added: We have information that many of them fled to the border zone and from there to Israel. From Israel, they left for Australia with passports under false names. [passage omitted]

Judge Denies LF Exonerated of Church Bombing

NC0204120094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Prosecutor General Magistrate Munif 'Uwaydat met with Judge Joseph Furayhah, judicial investigator into the Sayyidat al-Najat church at the Palace of Justice this morning. Furayhah briefed 'Uwaydat on the investigation process of the bombing of the church in Zuq Mikha'il.

After the meeting, Judge 'Uwaydat made a statement in which he denied a report published by the newspaper AL-DIYAR yesterday that he had exonerated the Lebanese Forces as an establishment of the charge of bombing the Sayyidat al-Najat church. He said the aforesaid newspaper's headlines differ from the article's text. He noted that what he really had said was that a judicial finding can only be decided on after completion of an investigation and will be declared subsequently in an indictment. He said that this rule pertains to the judicial procedure mechanism and does not mean anyone has been cleared, as the paper incorrectly concluded.

He regretted the use of his statement for narrow-minded political purposes and as a pretext for a defense in the media aimed at detouring the investigations from their natural course. He noted that we need to continue the investigations in an objective atmosphere and in strict secrecy free from distortions of facts.

Hizballah Criticizes 'Terrorist' Decision on Media

NC0404104194 Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 2 Apr 94 p 5

[Excerpt] Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has said that the government has silenced national and Islamic media, which support security measures and peace. He urged the government to rescind its decision immediately.

Nasrallah was addressing a memorial for Hajj 'Abdallah Mi'mah in Al-Laylaki Mosque yesterday. The service was attended by 'Ammar al-Musawi, Hizballah deputy Political Bureau chairman; Deputies Muhammad Ra'd, Muhammad Funaysh, and 'Ali 'Ammar; and some ulema. Nasrallah said: Government officials have repeatedly sought to oppress the media. We even hear dissonant voices today calling for additional controls on the printed media, which thought the publication law protected them from oppression. These voices are also demanding control over printing houses.

He added: People in Lebanon feel annoyed and suffocated by this. The government was not wise in making this decision. Indeed, it was opportunistic because it used the political and security situation to pass the plan. Like all forces, trends, and all the Lebanese people, we call on the political authority to rescind this unfair and terrorist measure and to promptly pass the media law. [passage omitted]

Al-Hariri Meets with Syria's Khaddam, Returns

NC0304060194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri returned from Damascus last night after having held talks with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam. The talks dealt with the latest local and regional developments.

Syrian Construction Minister Pays Visit

Meets With al-Hariri

JN0104173494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri received in Beirut today, Majid 'Izzu Ruhaybani, the Syrian minister of reconstruction and building, and his delegation who arrived in Beirut this morning.

Talks centered on bilateral relations, historical links, and existing ties between the two countries and ways to bolster them to realize joint aims and interests.

In a statement to reporters, the minister emphasized continued Syrian support of Lebanon's march to entrench its national unity, rebuild it, and support its struggle to liberate its occupied territory.

The minister said: At President Hafiz al-Asad's instructions, Syria is always prepared—prompted by its brotherly feelings—to implement any projects by Syrian general construction companies if Lebanon needs them. Ruhaybani alluded to schools constructed in southern Lebanon by Syrian companies in cooperation with the higher committee in support of the south. He said: We are prepared to contribute to reconstructing Lebanon within the framework of the close brotherly cooperation between the two countries.

This afternoon, Ruhaybani and his delegation held meetings with Dr. Hasan Yusuf, head of the council of the south, and the council's members. They discussed joint work to implement services projects being implemented in southern Lebanon by joint financing of the Syrian committee of solidarity with the people of the south and by the council of the south. Discussion also dealt with aspects of future cooperation and ways to support the people of southern Lebanon and western al-Biqā' to confront the repeated and bestial Israeli attacks.

Dr. Hasan Yusuf, chairman of the council of the south, praised Syria's continuous assistance to the people of the south, under President Hafiz al-Asad, to ensure the means of their steadfastness in the face of the Israeli occupation.

Meets With Public Works Minister

JN0204073394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Beirut—A meeting was held in Ba'labakk, eastern Lebanon, yesterday between Majid 'Izzu Ruhaybani, the Syrian minister of construction and building, and Muhammad Bassam Murtada, the Lebanese minister of public works. The meeting was attended by Nasri Khuri, head of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council, and Dr. Hasan Yusuf, head of the Council of the South.

Discussions dealt with the work of the Syrian construction companies in Lebanon, as well as bilateral cooperation. Ruhaybani hoped that his visit to Lebanon will enhance the relations of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination between the two countries and peoples. He expressed the readiness of the companies affiliated with the Ministry of Construction and Building to implement any project agreed on in sisterly Lebanon.

For his part, Lebanese Minister Bassam Murtada stressed that the scope of cooperation between Syria is very extensive. He said sisterly Syria has always contributed to fields of construction in Lebanon.

Nasri Khuri, secretary general of the Higher Syria-Lebanese Council, said joint companies between the two countries will hold several meetings next week.

Confers With Birri

NC0204133494 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri received Majid 'Izzu Ruhaybani, Syrian minister of reconstruction and building, and his accompanying delegation in al-Musaylih this morning. Dr. Hasan Yusuf, the chairman of the Council for the South, and some officials of the council and the Qasyun Company also attended the meeting. After the meeting, Minister Ruhaybani said that the discussions dealt with Syrian aid to implement certain projects in cooperation with Lebanese national companies as a fraternal contribution by Syrian companies in reconstructing Lebanon. The Syrian minister, Dr. Yusuf, and the delegation members left for al-Nabatiyah and toured the schools built by the Syrian Reconstruction Ministry in cooperation with the Council for the South.

Al-Hariri on Domestic Situation, Ties With Israel

AU0104073094 Vienna DER STANDARD in German 31 Mar 94 p 3

[Interview with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri by Artur K. Vogel; place and date not given: "Uncertainty After the Civil War"]

[Text] [Vogel] The differences between the rich and the poor are crass and seem to have increased.

[Al-Hariri] In Lebanon there was a broad middle-class, which largely disappeared because of the war. Now it is recovering, but this will take some years. Reconstruction has begun: You see everywhere many projects and many building sites. The hope in financial circles is that the country will really take off. Many Lebanese are coming back and investing here.

[Vogel] Several hundreds of thousands of expellees are also waiting for help; they do not notice any reconstruction.

[Al-Hariri] My government is the first that is seriously taking care of them. We took thousands of families back to their places of origin. Now a bill that is to enable the government to spend \$436 million on this has been presented in parliament. If the bill goes through, the problem might be solved in a few years.

[Vogel] However, many refugees do not have much confidence in your government. They are saying that you are not concerned about the common people.

[Al-Hariri] I cannot blame them. They are right if they feel ill at ease, but they are not right if they think that we do not take care of them.

[Vogel] To put it mildly, unease can also be felt among the Christians. On 27 February, 10 men were killed and 60 injured by a bomb attack in the Maronite-Catholic Church of Suk Mikhail near Junieh. When you visited

the site, you talked of the involvement of foreign powers, in order to divert international attention from the Hebron massacre (two days before). Your information minister even accused Israel directly. Are you sticking to this theory?

[Al-Hariri] Even during the war—it was a religious war—nobody dared to attack a mosque or a church. The attack was an event that is far from the habits of the Lebanese. They were cruel, but they never did such a thing.

[Vogel] Meanwhile, 127 people have been arrested. Does this not point to local perpetrators?

[Al-Hariri] If a crime is committed and the police do not have any direct clues, they examine the suspects. Most were released after a few hours.

[Vogel] You said yourself that certain forces still want to destroy Lebanon's fragile unity. What would be their motivation?

[Al-Hariri] After a civil war, there is always uncertainty for a few years. There are people who want to overthrow the government in order to get into power themselves.

[Vogel] That is to say, are you as a Sunni Muslim denying that the center of power in Lebanon is moving too far toward the Muslims and away from the Christians, as many Christians are claiming?

[Al-Hariri] We are not trying to deprive the Christians of their power; we are trying to create a balance of power.

[Vogel] You have another problem: Israel continues to occupy 10 percent of your country.

[Al-Hariri] We are negotiating with the Israelis on their withdrawal. We are prepared to guarantee security at their border. It is for the Israelis to decide whether they want to be part of the Middle East or to dominate it. If they want to dominate, there will be no peace.

[Vogel] Among other things, Israel is calling for the disarmament of the Hizballah militias.

[Al-Hariri] The Israeli occupation is creating resistance. If Israel wants to withdraw from Lebanon, the Lebanese Government would be responsible for nobody trying any

longer to disturb the peace. But as long as the occupation continues, I cannot keep the Lebanese from putting up resistance.

Patriarch Assails State's Attitude Toward Christians

NC0104181194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] Maronite Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Butrus Sfayr stated that the Christians' abstention from taking part in the state's activities is due to the imbalance in the distribution of roles following the settlement accord that put an end to the war. He pointed out that the state has not treated everyone equally and has failed to make Christians feel that it cares about them as much as other citizens.

He noted that except for faith in God, freedom is Lebanon's one and only asset. He pointed out that all complaints reflect violations of the principle of national accord.

Patriarch Sfayr's remarks came in his Easter message to the Lebanese today.

Minister Views Christian Presence in Government

NC0304075194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0700 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] Following his meeting with Maronite Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Butrus Sfayr in Bkirki yesterday, Minister of State Jean 'Ubayd spoke about three issues. The first of these deals with the Christian representation [in state institutions]. He stressed that there is such representation, as reflected in the presence of the Franjiyah, Mu'awwad, and Buwayz families. No one can dispute their patriotism and nationalism, he stressed.

As for the Christian figures living abroad, Minister 'Ubayd said that Raymond Iddih himself chose to leave and so did General Michel 'Awn and former President al-Jumayyil. Gen. 'Awn can return at any time but must do so in accordance with the law, 'Ubayd added.

Concerning the third issue, Minister 'Ubayd said: I am against a Muslim state or a Christian state.

Foreign Ministry Reacts to U.S. Drug Charges

JN0204212394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] The Syrian Foreign Ministry has stated the following:

For many years, the Syrian authorities, in cooperation with the Lebanese authorities, have been exerting themselves to combat the growing of poppies and other narcotics, especially in the al-Biqa' region, long known for producing such crops.

We can state, on the strength of the information available to us, that these efforts have succeeded in putting an end to the cultivation of these illegal plants, despite the extreme difficulties involved in combating them, curbing their processing, and banning trade in them.

Syria is known to have passed strict anti-drug legislation and taken severe disciplinary measures against drug growers, manufacturers, smugglers, and traffickers. Syria ranks among the countries with the cleanest record in this area. Furthermore, the values and traditions of the Syrian Arab society in themselves constitute a natural immunity against this blight.

Syria's efforts in the area of fighting drugs have earned the satisfaction of the United Nations and the regional committee for the fight against drugs, which chose Damascus as the venue for its 30th congress in February, 1994. The committee's representative judged Syria's anti-drug drive to be commendable.

For all the above reasons, and despite the fact that the competent agency at the U.S. State Department recommended that Syria be removed from the list of nations charged with failing to combat drug abuse—to cite an article published in the 21 March issue of THE WASHINGTON POST—certain members of the U.S. Administration, many of whose stands have hindered rather than facilitated the peace process, have deliberately ignored these recommendations, and insisted on keeping Syria on the list, despite all the realities and facts that prove Syria's fight against drugs.

It is now clear beyond a shadow of doubt that the aim of placing Syria on the drug or terrorism list is to pressure Syria into relinquishing its stands and just causes, acknowledged by the international community and endorsed by UN resolutions, envisaging a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Syria's stands and just causes cannot be bargained over. Syria's efforts and measures in the anti-drug campaign originate in a conviction in the need to wipe out the risks inherent in this scourge and its devastating impact on individuals and societies in this region and elsewhere.

Syria is not looking for a reward from anyone for its antidrug and antiterror efforts. Syria would not have issued this statement if it were not for the attempts of certain circles in the United States to misrepresent facts

and falsify records to advance political pressure that will only shake the confidence of the region in the role of the United States as an honest broker in the peace process.

Radio Questions Motives of U.S. Drug Charges

JN0304154494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1135 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The U.S. Administration's decision to keep Syria on the list of countries accused of not combating drugs leads us to question the purpose behind this decision in terms of the peace process and the United States' role in it. We are not worried about aid that could be withheld because of such a decision or by the drug list itself or any other similar lists. What is important is who and what is behind this decision.

The U.S. press a few days ago explained who is behind the decision when it revealed that certain named elements rejected a recommendation by a competent body within the U.S. Department of State to lift Syria's name from the drug list and insisted on keeping it. These elements are well known for their loyalties and bias toward the other non-Arab party in the Arab-Zionist conflict. Their stands have often obstructed the peace process to serve the Israeli party.

The fact that these elements are behind this decision, indicates that the issue is not an issue of drugs or Syrian efforts to put an end to the production and distribution of such a blight. Indeed, it is a means to exert pressure on Syria to influence its stands. But Syria's stand cannot be bargained over in terms of a comprehensive and just peace in the region or the legitimate bases on which this peace should be founded. If the concern of those elements was really to combat the blight of drugs, then this concern would have been compatible with Syria's concern. Moreover, fairness would have prompted them to admit the fact sensed by every citizen in Syria and Lebanon, and even by every honest observer, that Syria has exerted serious efforts and enacted deterrent legislations aimed at uprooting this blight—in terms of production, distribution, and addiction.

However, was real the motive of those who have insisted on keeping Syria on their list to expose Syria's stand on combating drugs or to undermine Syria's stands on the issue of a just and comprehensive peace? The answer is clear by defining who is and what is behind that decision. We, in Syria, did not and will not pay heed to this list or other similar lists. We will persevere in our efforts and sustain our stands toward uprooting the blight of aggression and occupation from our occupied territories just as much as we are seeking to uproot the blight of drugs. This is in order to have security, stability, peace, and tranquility prevail in this region and to provide all necessary conditions conducive to unleashing the potential of the sons of this Arab region.

As for the U.S. Administration, which has, on the issue of this list, adopted the stand of those elements well known for obstructing the Middle East peace process, we deem it our right to ask: If unfairness on such an obvious issue as combating drugs has reached this point, then how can one trust that this administration will be a fair, unbiased, and honest partner on issues that deal with the fate of the region as faced in the peace process?

Al-Shar' on Arab Boycott, Disarmament, Arab Situation

NC0104204494 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 1620 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' by Safa' Hijazi in Cairo; date not given; from the "Arabs' Home" program—recorded]

[Text] [Hijazi] Mr. Faruq al-Shar', Syrian foreign minister, the Arab League Council's 101st session had the topic of amending the Arab League Charter on its agenda. Some say that the Arab situation does not allow this amendment now. When will the Arab situation allow it?

[Al-Shar'] We in Syria adhere to and insist on rectifying the Arab situation. We always say, and I said it in front of the Arab ministers, that the Arab situation is not in its best shape, with Arab countries facing serious problems—Iraq, Algeria, Somalia, southern Sudan. Even Yemeni unity is threatened with collapse, God forbid, and there is the possibility of a civil war in Yemen if the unity falters. All this prompts us to work seriously and earnestly to rectify the Arab situation and create the right atmosphere for better Arab relations. This is our objective, anyway, and we must continue to work to realize it. The Gulf war made things difficult, but we in Syria believe that we should not consider the Gulf crisis the end of the world. True, we must study all the negative consequences of the Gulf war and address them in a positive and constructive spirit with a view toward remedying the Arab situation and serving common Arab interests.

[Hijazi] Do you think there is an international collusion to disarm the Arabs and retain Israel's arsenal? What about the elimination of the mass destruction weapons from the Middle East? This was also a topic on the session's agenda.

[Al-Shar'] There are international inclinations, with Israel behind them, to disarm the Arabs and retain Israel's formidable arsenal of conventional and nonconventional weapons. You know that Israel possesses and manufactures all kinds of mass destruction weapons—nuclear, chemical, and biological. It has so far refused to subject its nuclear weapons to international supervision and to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and the safeguards agreement. Therefore, we believe that 1995 will see a review of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and this gives the Arabs a chance to adopt a unified position regarding the renewal of the treaty on the

condition that Israel join it. The Arabs must take a position regarding the renewal of the treaty if Israel refuses to join it.

[Hijazi] The Arab boycott of Israel was also on the agenda. What happened?

[Al-Shar'] We held contacts with many Arab foreign ministers and sensed a unified and firm Arab position; namely, that the boycott should continue until its causes—the state of war between the Arabs and Israel and Israel's occupation of Arab territory—are removed. As long as these causes remain, the boycott must be maintained. This is a peaceful act and a legitimate right of self defense against aggression and occupation. It is strange that we, the Arabs, are asked and pressured to lift the boycott, which is a legitimate act of self defense, when no pressure is applied on Israel to end its illegitimate occupation of the Arab lands. This is not a topic for discussion; it was not discussed in the meetings. But there was an item on the agenda concerning a report from the main Arab Boycott Bureau in Damascus; this is an annual report on the activity of the bureau and how to strengthen the boycott by closing the gaps that may appear from time to time. The aim was not to discuss lifting the boycott. So far, this item has not been on the agenda with the purpose of lifting the boycott. There was virtual Arab unanimity not to discuss the subject and to maintain the boycott.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Visits

Yeltsin's Envoy Arrives

JN0104170694 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1510 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] Damascus, 1 Apr (SANA)—Igor Ivanov, Russian deputy foreign minister and Russian President Boris Yeltsin's envoy to the Middle East, and his delegation arrived in Damascus this afternoon. Their visit to the Syrian Arab Republic will last for several days.

Ivanov, was received at the Damascus International Airport by Raslan 'Allush, assistant to the foreign minister, director of Eastern Europe Desk at the Foreign Ministry, the Russian ambassador in Damascus, and embassy staff.

In a statement to the Syrian Arab News Agency's correspondent, Ivanov said: I am carrying a personal message to President Hafiz al-Asad from Russian President Boris Yeltsin. President al-Asad's ideas are appreciated by the Russian leadership, and his excellency enjoys high reputation and esteem in Russia.

He said this visit was mandated by the Russian president within the framework of efforts the Russian leadership is carrying out to overcome the situation in the region caused by the Hebron massacre.

Ivanov emphasized that Russia wants the peace process to continue and wants a strong and comprehensive peace

to be realized in the Middle East. He added that Russia, in its capacity as a superpower and one of the sponsors of the peace process, has made and will continue to make all efforts toward reaching this objective.

He emphasized that Moscow attaches great importance to cooperation between Syria and Russia.

Ivanov said he will discuss in Damascus issues relating to the Middle East peace process in addition to bilateral relations.

Concluding his statement, he emphasized that the latest Russian initiative is valid and long term, and that its implementation depends on the positions of all concerned parties.

Al-Asad Receives Envoy

JN0204161594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1230 today Igor Ivanov, first deputy Russian foreign minister and envoy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, and his delegation.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Russian Ambassador in Damascus Aleksandr Zotov.

Ivanov conveyed a message to President al-Asad from President Yeltsin dealing with bilateral relations and the peace process. President al-Asad gave him a message in reply for President Yeltsin.

The Russian envoy spoke about his country's concern for the peace process in the region and its willingness to play an active role in this field. He also expressed his country's appreciation for Syria's status and its positive role in the region.

President al-Asad welcomed the willingness of Russia, which is one of cosponsors of the peace process, to play an active role to help this process advance on the path to a just and comprehensive peace.

Envoy Discusses 'Madrid 2' Initiative

NC0304060594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2100 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Damascus, 2 Apr (MENA)—Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov has emphasized that Russia's initiative to hold a new conference on the Middle East peace—Madrid 2—is aimed at the future of the region's peace process and does not invalidate the current efforts and negotiations to settle the Middle East problem.

In (?statements) to the MENA correspondent in Damascus, he said the current bilateral negotiations between the Arabs and Israel according to the Madrid formula will produce tangible results.

Ivanov, who is currently visiting Syria, said the essence of the Russian initiative is based on the need to hold a

new meeting of the parties concerned in the Middle East negotiations to evaluate what has been achieved, define [words indistinct] of the future, and devise a new formula for the future of the Middle East peace process.

The Russian deputy foreign minister described his talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus today as very good and said they discussed bilateral ties in various fields. He added that he sensed during the meeting a mutual understanding on reaching a peaceful settlement for the Middle East problem and avoiding undermining the negotiating process.

He affirmed that his country will pursue an effective and active role as a cosponsor of the peace conference and noted that President al-Asad welcomes this role.

Ivanov said agreement was reached during the talks on arranging a bilateral meeting of experts to discuss Syria's debts to Russia.

Says Initiative Not 'Alternative'

JN0304071394 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Sana' al-Imam dispatch from Damascus; from the "Panorama" program]

[Text] In an exclusive statement to Radio Monte Carlo following his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad, Russian presidential envoy Igor Ivanov has said that the new Russian initiative is based on holding a second conference in Madrid. Ivanov said: Despite all the difficulties, the negotiating process will lead to tangible results. Holding another conference in Madrid will give everyone the opportunity to evaluate what has been realized and define the future outlines and formulas. However, this conference does not constitute an alternative to current negotiations.

The Russian envoy said: Those who understood our initiative, as I have explained it, supported it and those who understood it to be an alternative to the negotiations rejected it. However, I do not believe that the initiative is categorically rejected although it needs time.

Ivanov counseled alertness and vigilance to avoid undermining the negotiating process. He emphasized Syria's readiness to continue pursuing an active and effective role to reach a just peace. He said President Hafiz al-Asad welcomes such a role.

On the two countries' bilateral relations, the Russian envoy said that an agreement has been reached with President al-Asad, who is held in high esteem in Russia, as he put it, to give a new push to bilateral relations in all fields. As for the Syrian debts to Russia, agreement has been reached to hold a meeting of experts from both sides to study the various options in light of the legitimate interests of both sides.

On Russia's views regarding the limited international observers [in Hebron] and whether such a number is

sufficient to protect a city of more than 120,000 Palestinians, Ivanov said that this is more a question of the efficiency rather than number of observers.

Concerning the absence of the Russian role and its reemergence recently following the Hebron massacre, the Russian envoy said that this role did not disappear in order to reemerge, but that it is continuing without clamor unless the situation warrants otherwise.

Press on Russian, U.S. Peace Roles, Hebron Accord

JN0304081994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Press review]

[Text] TISHRIN comments editorially on the Russian deputy foreign minister's visit to Damascus to convey a message from Russian President Boris Yeltsin to President Hafiz al-Asad. The message deals with the peace talks, which have been broken off because of Israel's intransigence, maneuvering, and refusal to respond to the peace talks' most important requirement, which is withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

TISHRIN notes that the latest round of talks in Washington following the al-Asad-Clinton summit was disappointing because of Israel's continued policy of prevarication and procrastination. Once again raising its alleged security problems, Israel evaded discussions on withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. Then, the paper says, the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre took place, only to consolidate the conviction that Israel is not serious about peace and that it seeks to use the talks as a cover for its aggressive, expansionist actions.

TISHRIN stresses that the recent events in the occupied territories have increased the conviction of Syria and other Arab parties that any peace in the region must be based on a just, comprehensive solution that meets Arab aspirations and restores the Arab rights and territories.

The paper stresses that if the Washington talks are to be successful, there is no alternative to an effective U.S., Russian, and international role that pushes for the implementation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Implementation of these resolutions means Israel's full withdrawal from the Golan Heights and other occupied territories. Syria has repeatedly stressed that there will be no compromise over the Golan, that there will be no peace without full withdrawal, and that Syria will not relinquish an iota of territory or any national and pan-Arab right.

Concluding its editorial, TISHRIN stresses that Syria wants peace, but Syria will never accept the partial and separate solutions demanded by Israel. Syria has the right to urge the cosponsors of the peace process to translate their assurances into a tangible solution that spreads justice and helps international law to prevail.

AL-BA'TH notes that the suspension of the latest round of bilateral peace talks in Washington was because of the Zionist settlers' brutal massacre of our kinfolk in the Ibrahimi Mosque.

AL-BA'TH adds that when the UN Security Council condemned the massacre and stressed the need to provide international protection for the people of Palestine, and when it emphasized the need to continue the peace process, which is viewed as an opportunity to achieve security and stability in the region, it became necessary to continue coordination among Arab parties in order to arrive at a common decision on the resumption of the peace negotiations. This has been explicitly stressed by Syria.

The paper says that so far, Israel has not shown an explicit commitment to withdraw from the Golan Heights. Nor has it shown an equal readiness to implement Resolution 425 providing for immediate Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Moreover, Israel is continuing its daily crimes against our kinfolk throughout the occupied Arab territories.

The paper continues: While the U.S. Administration, which has frequently stressed its commitment to advancing the peace process, is preparing for a renewed diplomatic move prior to the resumption of bilateral talks, Russia, as one of the two cosponsors, has reasserted its readiness to play its role in the peace process.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH stresses the need for concerted international efforts, which can lead to tangible results if they focus on changing the intransigent Israeli position. The winning card is the UN resolutions, which must be implemented, and which must not be allowed to be hampered indefinitely by the Rabin government.

In a comment, AL-THAWRAH writes on the recent agreement in Cairo between Israel and the PLO, providing for the deployment of international observers in Hebron. The paper refers to a statement by Yosi Beilin, the Israeli deputy foreign minister, in which he said that the agreement will change nothing in the current state of affairs, and that it has given Israel full control over all security affairs in this city.

AL-THAWRAH says that such a statement shows that this agreement is ineffective, useless, and does not have a shred of credibility to give the Palestinians even a little sense of security and tranquility. Besides, it does not give any actual guarantees for preventing the recurrence of the Zionist settlers' massacre in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque. The paper adds that the agreement does not provide any tangible solution to the volatile situation in the occupied territories, a situation which is deteriorating daily as a result of the repressive Israeli practices. Nor does the agreement provide an adequate method for preventing further bloodshed there.

Concluding its comment, AL-THAWRAH says that if the Rabin government continues its maneuvers and

procrastination, and if it continues to raise security pretexts to justify the policy of occupation and expansion, then it will be fooling nobody but itself by this false and deceptive logic. This is because it has become common knowledge that only a just, comprehensive peace that is accompanied by full withdrawal from all the occupied territories can provide security for everyone.

Iranian Envoy Arrives With Messages for al-Asad

JN0304202094 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 3 Apr 94

[Text] A delegation from the Iranian Majles arrived in Damascus this evening. The delegation is led by Dr. Hasan Ruhani, deputy speaker of the Majles and

chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. The delegation will hold talks with the People's Assembly officials.

The delegation was received at Damascus International Airport by 'Adil Jamus, the deputy speaker of the People's Assembly; Shakir Is'ayyid, the head of the Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee; and the Iranian ambassador in Damascus.

Upon arrival, Dr. Ruhani said he is carrying two messages for President Hafiz al-Asad from Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, and Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Dr. Ruhani expressed the Iranian people's appreciation of the wise political leadership in Syria, and hailed bilateral relations in various fields.

Afghanistan

President Rabbani Exchanges Views With UN Envoy

LD0204190094 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 2 Apr 94

[Text] Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, met this morning at the presidential palace Mr. Mahmud Mastiri, special envoy of the UN secretary general for Afghanistan and his entourage delegation. The correspondent of the Bakhtar Information Agency reports that at this meeting, attended by [name indistinct], minister of state for foreign affairs; Dr Abdol Hai Allahi, minister of state; [words indistinct] esteemed Dr. Abdol Rahman [words indistinct]. Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, first of all welcomed to Kabul Mr. Mahmud Mastiri and his entourage delegation. Rabbani expressed hope that his visit to Kabul would bring about a positive result for peace and prosperity for the people of Afghanistan. The esteemed president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan then shed light on the country's political-military situation, the unpleasant situation resulting from the failed coup d'etat and heavy losses stemming from this coup attempt, and measures and peace-seeking actions taken by the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Our country's esteemed president also spoke about work done by the peace delegation in Kabul for securing peace and a reliable security in Afghanistan, and for ending the war and bloodshed. He spoke about the economic problems, especially in Kabul, and emphasized the need for UN cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Esteemed Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of our country, expressed appreciation for the efforts of Mr. Mastiri, special envoy of the UN secretary general, and in general for the UN endeavor to end the fighting and bloodshed in Afghanistan, and for humanitarian assistance extended to the people of Afghanistan by this organization. He expressed all-around cooperation by the Islamic State of Afghanistan for securing peace and stability as well as the solution of the country's current difficulties by talks.

Mr. Mahmud Mastiri then expressed appreciation for statements and goodwill displayed by esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani for the solution of issues by talks. Mastiri expressed hope that a reliable peace would be restored in Afghanistan as soon as possible, that the country's current difficulties would be solved by understanding, and that the ground would be prepared for the extension of international assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan and prosperity of the persecuted people of Afghanistan.

Mr. Mahmud Mastiri at this meeting said that the purpose of his visit to Kabul is to help the people of Afghanistan as much as possible to restore peace and security and to extend UN humanitarian assistance. The special envoy of the UN secretary general said that he

will use all available possible means so that the people of Afghanistan can achieve peace and security. The UN will extend every necessary cooperation in this respect. At this meeting Mr. Mahmud Mastiri asked that the enforced ceasefire be allowed to continue for the progress of affairs and peace-seeking efforts. The esteemed president gave a positive reply to this request by the UN special envoy and said: We have declared a unilateral ceasefire in the past and now we are also ready for the continuation of the current enforced ceasefire. We want the current difficulties to be resolved so that a reliable peace and profound security will be guaranteed in Afghanistan.

The correspondent of the BIA adds: Mr. Mahmud Mastiri arrived in Kabul this morning by a UN special flight. The UN delegation was welcomed at Kabul airport by esteemed Najibollah Lafra'i, minister of state for foreign affairs; esteemed Abdol Aziz Morad, head of the presidential press office; esteemed Dr. Abdol Hai Allahi and Hamidullah Tarzi, ministers of state; esteemed Sayed Eshaq [surname indistinct], minister of culture and information; esteemed Dr. Abdol Rahman; esteemed Fazl Karim Aymaq, Kabul mayor; the acting head of protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and a number of other high-ranking state officials.

Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani and Mr. Mahmud Mastiri then answered questions raised by domestic and foreign journalists regarding today's talks:

In response to a question, esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani said: This was and is the strategy of the Islamic State of Afghanistan: to resolve issues by talks and understanding and to secure peace. We never support the idea of resolving issues by weapons. We are interested in the UN role for the solution of the country's difficulties. We are interested in all difficulties being resolved by peaceful means. Today's talks with the UN envoy were useful.

In reply to another question, the esteemed president said: We declare that a permanent ceasefire is to be continued in Kabul. [Words indistinct] the fighting is to discontinue by the (? opposition forces) against the persecuted people of Kabul [words indistinct] and the innocent people of Kabul are not to be punished by closing supply roads. We are hoping that supply roads to Kabul are to be opened by the opposition in honor of the arrival of the special envoy of the UN secretary general. The esteemed president said: Our talks are continuing.

In reply to a question, esteemed Mahmud Mastiri expressed optimism regarding the results of today's talks with our country's president.

Rockets Shake Kabul

NC0104172694 Paris AFP in English 1648 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] Islamabad, April 1 (AFP)—Forces opposing Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani killed and wounded inhabitants Friday [1 April] in a hail of rockets, loyalist radio Kabul said.

The broadcast, monitored here, said the attack came on the eve of a planned visit by a special United Nations peace mission led by Mahmoud Mestiri.

The UN team is to leave Islamabad for Kabul Saturday for talks with Rabbani, his rival, Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, and other factional leaders to explore ways of ending 13 weeks of fighting for control of Kabul.

The radio, controlled by Rabbani loyalists, blamed the attack on Hekmatyar and his military ally, Abdoul Rashid Dostam, leader of the Uzbek militia, and said it came despite their pledge to hold a temporary ceasefire from dawn Friday to facilitate the UN visit.

The radio said people were killed and wounded but it gave no figures.

No confirmation was immediately available from the rival side.

Rabbani Declares Readiness To Accept Cease-Fire

BK0204133794 Hong Kong AFP in English 1322 GMT 2 Apr 94

[By Terence White]

[Text] KABUL, April 2 (AFP)—Emerging from a lunchtime meeting with United Nations special envoy Mahmud Al-Mestiri Saturday, Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani declared his commitment to a permanent ceasefire in Kabul.

"We are ready to accept a permanent and unconditional ceasefire," Rabbani told journalists at the Presidential Palace.

Rabbani added he hoped the "other side" would follow his lead on the ceasefire, stop their bombardment of the city, and open the highways for free passage of relief food supplies to Kabul.

Just before Rabbani emerged from lunch with Mestiri three artillery rounds crashed into the neighbourhood, but apart from this there was an unusual but welcome calm in the capital.

Mestiri heads a UN delegation which will spend three days in the capital talking to Afghan leaders in a bid to end the current three-month long factional fighting which has killed and wounded more than 15,000, driven hundreds of thousands from their homes and destroyed vast tracts of the city.

Rabbani's chief rival Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar has demanded the president's resignation as a precondition for a negotiated peace settlement but Mestiri said he did not discuss this with Rabbani.

"This point was not included in our negotiations," Mestiri told AFP.

Mestiri's departure from the Presidential Palace was blocked by a small group of placard-waving children demonstrating for peace.

Exiting from his limousine Mestiri spoke with two young Afghan girls who handed him their written demands.

"I know all the children in Afghanistan want peace," Mestiri said, before driving off to the Intercontinental Hotel for his next meeting, with provincial peace delegation leader Jallaloddin Haqani.

The pistol-packing Haqani said all sides in the factional fighting had agreed on the point that the military option was null and void.

However, 200 kilometres (120 miles) north of Kabul fighting raged between the forces of Rabbani's commander-in-chief, former defence minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, and Hekmatyar's military ally, Uzbek warlord General Abdol Rashid Dostam.

The fighting is around Dostam-occupied Qelagai, where massive amounts of ammunition and large numbers of Masood troops are being trucked daily in preparation for an attack against the strategic centre of Pule Khumri, half an hour's drive further north.

UN sources said there was a possibility that observers might be sent to Kabul to monitor the situation but ruled out the military role of Blue Helmets as peace-makers.

100-Man Opposition Forces Switch to Government Side

LD0104185694 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 1 Apr 94

[Text] In continuation of the Golboddin-Dostum militiamen coming over to the side of government in the country's northern regions, today 100-man armed group, led by Mohammad Nasim, joined the Islamic army's division 24 in Fariab province.

The military correspondent of Bakhtar Information Agency reports from Fariab province that since the start of clearing-up operation of the country's northern regions carried out by the Islamic army's forces and Mojahedin, thousands of militiamen have abandoned the Golboddin-Karmal-Dostum infamous triangle ranks and came over to the side of the Islamic army's forces and Mojahedin stationed in these regions.

The report adds that the mopping-up operation by the Mojahedin and the Islamic army has been continuing vigorously in Fariab province. The inhabitants and the Muslim people of Fariab province have been always earnestly cooperating with Mojahedin and the units of the Islamic army for the elimination of the last nests of communism in the country, and they sincerely discharge their Islamic duty.

Opposition Forces Launch Attack

LD0104182994 *Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 1 Apr 94*

[Text] The infamous Golboddin-Dostum militia launched a futile attack on the Islamic army's positions last night from the southern direction but was repulsed by the Islamic army's counterattack after loosing three opposition forces positions and suffering heavy losses.

A responsible source of the Ministry of Defense said to the correspondent of Bakhtar Information Agency that the savage militia last night at 0100 attempted to invade the Islamic army's positions from the southern direction but forced to retreat after suffering heavy losses; three of their positions were seized by the Islamic army. The source added that the infamous militia after this defeat carried out a rocket attack on residential regions of Kabul as a result of which a large number of our citizens were either martyred or injured. A number of residences were demolished. The attack took place with only one day remaining from the visit to Kabul of Mahmud Mastiri, special envoy of the UN secretary general.

The repeated attacks by the Golboddin-Dostum militia during the past two nights and the firing of rockets at the city's residential regions is taking place with the aim of showing Kabul as insecure. The infamous Golboddin-Dostum militia who have faced decisive military defeats both in Kabul and in the country's northern regions, are attempting now to create obstacles for a special (? presentation of proposals), the will of the nation, and peace-seeking international efforts for solving conflicts in the country.

India

Islamabad TV: Widespread Demonstrations in Kashmir

BK0104150194 *Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 1 Apr 94*

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, widespread demonstrations were staged after Juma'h [Friday] congregations today to protest against the Indian troops atrocities in the wake of devastation of military cantonment in Srinagar. The occasion coincided with the death anniversaries of Dr. Abdul Ahad Guru and mojahed Ashfaq Majid Wani, considered to be one of the earliest martyrs of Kashmiris' struggle. Addressing a big gathering at Jami' Masjid [grand mosque] in Srinagar, leaders of All Parties Hurriet Conference declared that they would continue to wage war against imposed Indian rule till the objective of the struggle is achieved.

Meanwhile, Indian troops continued their siege and search operations, in which many civilians were martyred and wounded. A large number of innocent civilians have been arrested during these operations. Indian troops opened indiscriminate firing on Srinagar-Jammu highway near Pampur, killing a bus conductor, Maqbul

Dar. In Kangan, dead body of Abdul Ghaffar Gujjar was recovered, who had been taken in custody a few days back. Dead body of mojahed Ghulam Mohammad was recovered from Doda. Mojahedin in retaliation carried out attacks on military positions at various places. A number of Indian troops, including a major and a subedar [low-ranking army officer], were killed when mojahedin attacked a military camp in Laulab area of District Kupwara.

5 Kashmiris Reportedly Burned Alive by Indian Troops

BK0304120094 *Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 3 Apr 94*

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, five people were reported burned alive by the Indian troops when a conflagration was caused by excessive mortar shellings by Indian forces during the siege of a vast area in Hindwara. Thirty houses were reduced to ashes in this reckless military action. The situation in the area was described as very tense and reports said the Indian military action was still continuing.

Meanwhile, in one area of Srinagar, three people were shot dead in a military crackdown. Similar crackdowns were also carried out in various other localities of Srinagar and Sopor. Another report says two bullet-ridden bodies were recovered in Bijbiara. The dead were victims of custodial killings. In Kulgam, two persons were shot dead by military personnel during a siege and search operation. The freedom fighters in a retaliatory move opened fire at the troops, but the casualties of the occupation troops are not known.

President Accepts Resignations of 2 Ministers

BK0204101294 *Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 2 Apr 94*

[Text] The resignations of the minister of state for railways, Mr. K.C. Lenka, and the minister of state for finance and parliamentary affairs, Dr. Abrar Ahmed, have been accepted. According to a Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] spokesman, the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, accepted their resignations on the advice of the prime minister. The two ministers have tendered their resignations as they ceased to be members of the Rajya Sabha from today.

Paper Objects to U.S. Initiative on Nonproliferation

BK0104151494 *Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 26 Mar 94 p 8*

[Editorial: "Capping It All"]

[Text] The new American move to promote nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia is yet another illustration of the Clinton administration's tendency to come out with glib answers to admittedly complicated issues. The proposal aims at getting India and Pakistan to agree to cap

their nuclear programmes and accept international inspection of their nuclear production facilities. There is hardly anything new about this approach. It had prompted earlier unsuccessful initiatives to bring about bilateral or regional accords on nuclear-free zones. The present attempt is essentially to present the same idea in a more attractive package. New Delhi must be extremely wary of the underlying trap. The renewed move is suspect especially because it looks like a clumsy stratagem to overcome strong Congressional opposition to the administration's frantic bid to scuttle the Pressler Amendment and supply F-16 combat aircraft to Pakistan. Originally, the administration had sought to oblige the Pakistani military establishment in return for the latter's agreement to verified capping of that country's nuclear programme. Since the proposal made no headway, Washington has now come up with the idea of roping in India into this dubious exercise. This suggests not so much an eagerness to promote nuclear non-proliferation as an overriding need to fulfill Pakistan's ambition to get hold of the sophisticated aircraft as soon as possible. It is particularly significant that while a specific incentive has been offered to Pakistan for accepting the capping idea, no sign is yet discernible of a quid pro quo to India, too.

The more intriguing aspect relates to the facile talk of verifiable capping of nuclear installations. It is by now common knowledge that the existing mechanism of verifying these has proved to be anything but foolproof. The International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] was totally in the dark about Iraq's nuclear programme although it was a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. The same fatal deficiency has now been indicated in the case of North Korea which, too, has formally subscribed to NPT.

India has often underscored the vital importance of an unquestionably sound verification regime if the objective of non-proliferation is to be achieved. But the IAEA has not yet devised one. So long as this is the stark reality, New Delhi must not allow itself to be cajoled much less coerced into accepting any non-proliferation proposal. In fact, credible verification of full compliance with nuclear obligations should be high on the agenda of the NPT review conference next year. The Clinton administration's bid to jump the gun is thus entirely misconceived. Most pertinently, India is already a co-sponsor with the US of a UN resolution seeking an international convention for fissile material cut-off. This is all the more reason why the US initiative limited to South Asia lacks justification.

Editorial Views Outcome of Raphael's Visit

BK0104151094 Calcutta ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA in Bengali 29 Mar 94 p 4

[Editorial: "She Came and Went Away"]

[Text] Many people did not believe that Robin Raphael would visit India. Experts thought that apart from the

normal courtesy, Raphael would get nothing more from Indian officials. They were also of the view that the majority of political parties would display their wrath against her. As a matter of fact, the reaction to her visit was quite different. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao did not meet Raphael. There is a rumor that Ms. Raphael is angry with the Indian Government for not giving her the opportunity to meet with the prime minister during her stay in New Delhi, despite several attempts to do so. Rao's close aides are very conscious about not giving any foreigner reason to criticize India's traditional hospitality. Many of the prime minister's administrative staff and his political colleagues held cordial meetings with Raphael. Tea and dinner parties were arranged for Raphael, during which she held talks with several prominent personalities. Home Minister Chavan, who is a bitter critic of the Clinton administration's Kashmir policy, talked with Robin Raphael for about an hour. An Indian official of Raphael's rank would hardly get the opportunity to meet officials in Washington equivalent to those Raphael was able to meet in New Delhi. Despite this, the female diplomat was accorded a very cordial reception in the Indian capital.

What is the reason for this cordiality? Our weakness toward the white-skinned people is perhaps the main reason behind this attitude. It is also due to the enthusiasm of some of our bureaucrats and ministers who want to get on the Americans' good side. During her visit, both sides were especially cautious. Raphael did not make any straightforward comments, which is quite contrary to her nature. She was very careful about her utterances and thoughtfully considered her words before making any statements. This American lady emulated the style adopted by diplomats in the past in dealing with such situations. For the time being, Raphael has deviated from the style being followed by the new and inexperienced officials of the Clinton administration. Perhaps Raphael changed her approach because she is the first pawn the U.S. President has sent to India. Mr. Strobe Talbott, the deputy secretary of state and the second pawn, is due in India in the first week of April. It would be foolish for New Delhi to seek consolation in the sweet words Raphael uttered during her visit. It would be wrong to deduce from Raphael's visit that there has been some change in the U.S. administration's policy toward India centering on Kashmir and the human rights issue. Similarly, it would also be wrong to assume that the U.S. efforts to sell F-16's to Pakistan by amending the Pressler Amendment have been stalled by this visit.

It may be mentioned that the Indian Government was also very careful during Robin Raphael's visit, as it does not want to offend the U.S. Government unnecessarily. New Delhi adopted this posture keeping in mind Narasimha Rao's forthcoming visit to Washington. India does not believe that a dramatic improvement is possible in the relationship between Delhi and Washington at present, nor does it believe it is possible for the United States to overcome its weakness for Pakistan. For these reasons, Stephen Solarz is not willing to become

the U.S. ambassador to India. An intelligent man, Solarz could not fail to realize that he will become powerless once he arrives in New Delhi. Although a marked improvement in political relations between the two countries would be difficult, it is possible to increase U.S. economic assistance to India. It is not difficult to realize that this is needed. Despite his apparent reluctance, Prime Minister Rao is eager to visit the United States. Rao and his advisers are encouraged by the success of his recent trip to Britain. They believe that India will be able to secure a lot of facilities from the United States if Rao is able to hold direct talks with President Clinton. It is unwise to think that India will be able to get additional benefits from the United States even if it does not respond to the U.S. Government's nuclear program for South Asia. Definite hints in this regard may be given during Strobe Talbott's visit. It would be wrong to think that Robin Raphel left a lot behind for India apart from her mouthful of laughter. It is necessary to see and observe what she says in Pakistan after she leaves India.

F-16's to Pakistan Said To Trigger Arms Race

BK0304141094 Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 26 Mar 94 p 1

["News Analyses" by Ranjit Kumar]

[Text] The supply of F-16 fighter aircraft to Pakistan will bring about a qualitative change in the strength of the Pakistan Air Force. The Pakistan Air Force presently has 37 F-16's and it is said that a similar number of additional F-16's will be supplied to Pakistan. Pakistan is demanding 71 such aircraft for which it has paid \$660 million in advance; it is highly possible that the United States will fulfill this demand by first supplying 38 F-16's and then another batch of 31 at a later stage.

This decision by the United States will provide a great setback to its nuclear nonproliferation targets. India could decide to massively deploy Prithvi and Agni missiles in response to the new consignment of F-16's to Pakistan. India only has started deploying Prithvi surface-to-surface missiles with a range of 250 km and out of respect for international concerns, no decision has been made about the deployment of Agni surface-to-surface missiles with a range of 2,500 km. The plan was to test three types of Agni missile and only a political decision regarding their deployment needs to be made after successful tests. Now that Pakistan is acquiring F-16's, which are capable of carrying nuclear weapons, India will be forced to give up its hesitations regarding the deployment of long-range missiles. In response, Pakistan too will deploy M-11 missiles in much greater number with the help of China. A single step by the United States will start an unprecedented arms race in South Asia, which it will not be able to stop. In the end, this arms race could prove fatal for the United States' own interests.

The statements issued recently by various level officials of the U.S. Administration's Departments of State and Defense make it clear that the United States is prepared to supply F-16's to Pakistan. Robin Raphel, U.S. assistant secretary of state for South Asia, during her current Indian visit is full of flattery while talking about relations with India, but she has not given any assurance on retracting the U.S. step of supplying F-16's to Pakistan which has adversely affected the Indian security environment. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott's comments to the U.S. Senate on 24 March makes it clear that the United States wants to give F-16's to Pakistan. Talbott, when he visits India on 6 April, will add insult to injury by asking India to cap its nuclear program because he is seeking a similar assurance from Pakistan.

The logic for giving F-16's to Pakistan at this time is that the United States will ask Pakistan to accept conditions in return for the F-16's. These conditions will lead to a freeze of its nuclear program at the present level, or in the American terminology, to cap its nuclear program. The capping of Pakistan's nuclear program will mean that it can maintain its current nuclear capability, but it cannot further enhance it.

At the beginning of the last decade the United States gave F-16's to Pakistan on the pretext of saving it from Soviet attacks from Afghanistan. Following India's protests, the United States argued that Pakistan is being supplied such conventional arms to make it feel secure and it then refrains from making nuclear weapons. It is interesting that Pakistan then not only acquired F-16's but continued its nuclear program as well. What guarantee is there now that Pakistan will cap its nuclear program forever in accordance with the pledge that it will make to the United States?

Official Denies 'Deal' With LTTE To Ensure Rao's Security

BK3003050994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 29 Mar 94

[Text] An official spokesman in New Delhi today denied reports appearing in a section of the press that the Indian security agencies have sought an assurance from the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] regarding the prime minister's security during his recent visit to Britain. He termed the reports as mischievous and baseless. The spokesman said there is absolutely no basis for reports of an alleged deal between the LTTE and the government in this regard. He said there is no question of lifting the ban on the LTTE imposed two years ago under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act.

Iran

Foreign Ministry Criticizes GCC Statement

LD0404110094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 4 Apr 94

[Text] In reply to the statement issued at the end of the 50th meeting of the foreign ministers of the Persian Gulf

Cooperation Council [GCC] on the subject of the three Iranian Islands, the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran said: This statement repeats the baseless claims of the government of United Arab Emirates which bears no fruit but causes disunity among the united ranks of Muslims, and Iran understands such statements to be contradictory to intentions that are based on goodneighborly relations in the region, and they are another step towards meeting the interest the foreign powers in the sensitive and strategic region of Persian Gulf.

The communique states that: The repetition of such futile claims will not change whatsoever the fact that the three islands belong to Iran.

In the communique, the Foreign Ministry stressed: Iran continues to take the initiative in direct talks with the Emirates and continues to ask this country—rather than resorting to a commotion that will have no result, let alone that will cause greater complexity and will aggravate the difficulties—to prove its good will in bilateral talks towards the clarification of any form of misunderstanding in the form of the letter by Shaykh Zayid, the head of United Arab Emirates to the president of Iran.

Also, regarding the issue of hajj, in the communique the Foreign Ministry stressed the freedom of the press in the Islamic Republic of Iran and regretted the inability of the Council's statement to appreciate this fact—and called on Saudi Arabia to respect and implement the agreement between the foreign ministers of the two countries regarding the number of pilgrims and the administration the Disavowal of Infidels Ceremonies, and that since the agreement was reached after the meeting of foreign ministers of Islamic countries in Amman, it called on Saudi officials to act towards better administration of this important divine duty, instead of breaching promises and creating difficulties in the execution of this Muslim's pilgrimage.

Velayati Continues African Tour, Arrives in Uganda

*LD0204203594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT
2 Apr 94*

[Text] Mr. Velayati, the foreign minister, arrived in Kampala, the capital of Uganda, on Saturday evening in a continuation of his tour of several African countries. Our country's foreign minister and his accompanying delegation were welcomed at Kampala Airport by the foreign minister, deputy prime minister, and the head of the Shiite Association of Uganda.

According to the Central News Unit, during his visit to Uganda, Mr. Velayati will not only hold talks with that country's senior officials, but will also attend and speak at the seventh assembly of the Pan African Congress at the invitation of that congress.

Radio Says U.S. Should Urge Israel To Sign NPT

*LD0304120094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0955 GMT
3 Apr 94*

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] A spokesman of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] in an interview described Israel's refusal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] as the main obstacle in the way of the Middle Eastern countries' cooperation with that international organization. [passage omitted]

The refusal of countries such as Israel to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty makes countries who have signed the treaty feel that their cooperation with the IAEA does not provide them with any kind of guarantee against a threat posed by the countries who are not members of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. That matter has not only created an obstacle in the way of cooperation between the Middle Eastern countries and the IAEA, it has also created a problem for international cooperation in that context.

The acknowledgement of the IAEA spokesman of that problem reveals the fact that if this situation is not addressed, it is not possible to pin much hope on the nuclear nonproliferation programs.

At a time when America, together with other countries and in cooperation with the IAEA, is exerting pressure on countries such as North Korea in order to facilitate the inspection of its installations suspected of prohibited nuclear activity, the signatories of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty expect that pressure is also exerted on countries such as Israel who have not signed the treaty and have not accepted any nonproliferation commitment, so that they accept nuclear nonproliferation.

Undoubtedly, that measure would serve international peace and stability as it can reduce obstacles in the way of nuclear nonproliferation.

Commentary Accuses U.S. of 'Provocative' Acts in Korea

*LD0304131194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1000 GMT
3 Apr 94*

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Recent news reports from the Korean peninsula speak of the continuation of the American interventionist policy in that region.

During the past few days, Washington has, once again, brought serious crisis to the Korean peninsula through its provocative acts such as the announcement of stationing Patriot missiles in South Korea and deciding to resume its joint maneuvers with North Korea. [passage omitted]

Paying attention to the current situation in the east Asia region and the Pacific Ocean makes it clear that the American policy aimed at creating tension in the Korean peninsula is intended as a long-term measure.

The east Asia region is the focus of attention of the big powers, such as America, because it seems that that region would play a more significant role in international developments in the future. Particularly that the Pacific Ocean region has, during the past few years, turned into an international focal point, and the rate of growth in some of the countries of the region, such as China, has reached a level that is currently unachievable by advanced industrial countries. It is clear that the continuation of such a trend, which is achieved through the continuation of efforts to maintain stability in the region, would force America to withdraw its 6,000-strong force from the Korean peninsula, which would mean losing its economic or military control of the region. That is an issue which, according to the White House politicians, contradicts the American strategy.

Ayatollah Meshkini Delivers First Qom Sermon

LD0204105094

[Editorial Report] Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian at 1520 GMT on 1 April carries a live relay of the Friday prayer sermons delivered by Ayatollah Meshkini at Qom. Reception is good.

Ayatollah Meshkini begins his first sermon with three minutes of Arabic prayers. He then says: "I would like to say a few sentences about the issue of Marja'iyat [the status of being the source of emulation]. Someone may ask from what source our sources of emulation derive their decrees and interpretations, which they then pass on to people as God's strictures." Meshkini asserts that all the fatwas and interpretations about the correct performance of religious rituals and moral conduct, and also about proper and acceptable religious belief, have one single source, out of which two currents flow. The source, he states, is the prophet, and the two currents are the Koran and the tradition. He then goes on to stress that Koran is a divine phenomenon, and as such its words cannot be questioned. The Koran, therefore, was passed intact through the generations, until it reached the hands of the Marja'.

On the question of the tradition, he says: "As far as the issue of tradition is concerned, this is where we differ significantly from our Sunni brothers. How lucky you, the Shiite faithful, are." He then quotes an Arabic verse, and Persian poetry about the Shiites' devotion to their imams. He goes on to say that whatever the prophet said was learned and safeguarded by 'Ali, the first imam. He says: "We believe that the tradition was left with 'Ali for safekeeping, and 'Ali passed it on to Hasan, who then passed it to Hoseyn, who in turn gave it to Sajjad; Sajjad gave to Baqir, who then passed it to Sadiq. Then it passed from Sadiq to Kazem, Kazem to Reza, Reza to Javad, Javad to Naqi, Naqi to Askari, and Askari to the

hidden imam. This all tells us that the prophet's tradition is in fact exactly the same as the one which has been passed to us and our sources of emulation today."

Meshkini then cites remarks and work on the tradition by the late Ayatollah Borujerdi, saying that he had 36,000 quotations from the prophet and the imams in his book, all of which can be proved to be authentic. He then declares: "To sum up, I would like to say that if someone asks from what source and what reference point a source of emulation derives his interpretations, then we have to answer that the sources and the points of reference are the divine book and the tradition of the prophet, which has been passed to us by the imams." After reciting an Arabic verse, he says: "The Sunni doctrine should not then be referred to as the orthodox sect; orthodoxy is in fact inherent within the Shiite doctrine, because it is the Shiites who have found the true Islamic tradition, on the basis of which they set out to issue decrees and interpretations. I will, on another occasion, refer to the Sunni mode of reasoning and interpretation, and the methods they choose. We are proud to be Shiites of the immaculate family of imams."

Yazdi Friday Prayers Second Sermon

LD0104145294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1054 GMT
1 Apr 94

[Second Friday prayers sermon by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, head of the judiciary branch and acting Friday prayers leader, in Tehran on 1 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] Today is 12 Farvardin [1 April]. In fact, 16 years have passed since the victory of the revolution. [passage omitted] I presume that the form of our Islamic government is still unfamiliar to the world. Whenever the world refers to the Islamic Republic—its decisions, organizations, officials, and responsibilities—one senses that the world has not properly understood the formation of our government. [passage omitted] When the word, republic, comes to mind, people think it is like other republics. Yes, they do. The majority of the people voted for it; that is, 98.2 percent of all Iranians who could vote said yes to the Islamic Republic, and this system relies on the public vote. Its decisions take shape through by voting. Majles representatives are elected by voting. Members of the Experts Assembly are elected by the people. People use the ballot in many other cases. [passage omitted]

Our people use the ballot to ensure that the government respects religious laws in employment and in the execution of government affairs. They voted that women should respect Islamic norms once they accept responsibility in organizations of the system. The republic has voted for the sovereignty of Islam. All people have called for the sovereignty of Islam. In some cases, it is true, votes are cast but they are not in contradiction with the

principles of Islam. There is a supervisory body—the honored Guardian Council which reviews approved bills and rejects things that contradict the constitution and the religious laws. Anyway, Islam is sovereign.

The world has not understood the form of the Islamic rule. They sometimes ask: Who is the first person of the system? They see that in other systems the head of the executive is the first person. Then they see that the Islamic system is different, where the first person is the supreme jurisconsult and has the honored position of the leadership, presently his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, may God preserve his noble shadow, [crowd chants in approval]. And he is responsible for determining the general plan of the country's management. In truth, the legitimacy of the other officials of the system is formed and actualized in their relationship to him. Of course, here I do not want to discuss the form of Islamic government which includes legitimacy, the measures of legitimacy, the method of activity, and the limits of activity. This is an extensive debate that must be discussed in its place. But I want to say that some officials in some countries speak, and one understands them to be thinking that republic in this system is the same as republic in some Arab or European country. Then they realize that the systems are not compatible in some issues and therefore ask: what are we to do? You should inform yourselves better. Improve your knowledge. You should understand our system, our people, our system of government and the rights and duties of each official.

Take for example, as you know, the judiciary. In places I have visited during my term of office, or in various countries of the world which I have studied, the highest person responsible for the judiciary is in fact supervised by the executive and even in many places he is appointed by the president. Even in systems managed by councils, a number of the council members are appointed by the president. But our system is different. In our system, the official responsible for the judiciary is directly appointed by the esteemed leader. Naturally then there are many differences in terms of laws, rights, and manifestations. In fact, the independence of the three powers is relatively greater in Islamic government than the systems existing in the world today. Anyway, in the Islamic republic, where the republic has called for Islam and where all the officials of the system work on the basis of Islam, there is a particular system with its particular methods, manifestations and consequences. [passage omitted]

There are a few other minor issues. Concerning the issue of the pilgrimage, I will voice my own view: First of all, I wish to point out to high-ranking officials that bilateral or multilateral issues cannot be resolved on a unilateral basis. One should never lose sight of this fact and try to resolve the issue on a unilateral basis. Whenever there is a bilateral or multilateral issue, we must accept the fact that it should be resolved on a bilateral or multilateral basis. This is the terminology being used by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A unilateral solution is either no solution at all or, even if it is a solution, it is only a temporary solution and may have other consequences.

Therefore, on the pilgrimage issue, one should accept that the problem is a bilateral problem. In order to resolve this problem, one should act in a bilateral way and, God willing, get to the root of the problem. In this connection, of course, if there are any words of advice or caution, any facts, one should bring these to the notice of the Saudi Government. One should remind them of the issues, inform them of the facts, and explain the situation of the Islamic Republics compared with other countries. When they say that there is no difference between this country and another country, one should tell them that there is a difference and there are reasons for the difference, and so on. One should explain the issues to them so that a correct solution can be found and the issue resolved on a fundamental basis. This is one point, that one cannot solve these problems from a unilateral point of view.

Of course, you know that the responsible officials have been trying to have discussions, they are discussing it, and I do not have any specific information about the outcome of these talks. One should not make a promise from this podium unless it is clearly based on facts and is definite; and as I do not have any specific information I will not make any promises.

The second issue - again I'm giving you my own opinion: It seems to me that we should clarify the issue and appoint someone with full powers. He should be told: Go and pursue the matter until a solution is found. This is the way to solve the problem. When every day we have a situation in which a certain newspaper of our country writes a certain article, a certain Saudi newspaper writes another article and a newspaper in a third country—which has nothing to do with the Islamic Republic or with Saudi Arabia—writes something else—this newspaper is a famous newspaper. These are all examples, each one of them have to be discussed. If a newspaper has written a certain article, what has that got to do with the fate of two countries? If a newspaper has published something, what has that got to do with the fate of a country?

Newspapers are free; each one of them publishes articles according to their taste. The issues of a country cannot be given to a couple of journalists to play with. A journalist's job is to do this. He looks at the issues and increases the size of his headline or reduces it. Or he might write something catchy for his headline and when you look at the article you do not see that much. I know a number of newspapers will not like what I am saying, but I have examples for everything I say.

All I am saying is that someone should be given the responsibility by the higher authorities of the country—with full powers and taking into account all the realities in our country, in the other country and in the world of Islam—to solve this problem fundamentally and once and for all; and far from the fears and discussions created by newspapers, especially the media and newspapers of

other countries, who are waiting for such opportunities to say something or other. The problem should be solved once and for all.

The third issue—again, this is my opinion: Regarding the hajj, I don't know if this decision was made by our esteemed deputy minister of culture and Islamic guidance or the minister of guidance or both. However, I say this: How many times should we experience one issue? If we experienced something and we were not successful, we should not go through it again. We should not repeat the act since we experienced defeat. When I see that it is officially announced that if someone were to have a passport and the passport holder had the visa to visit that country and we said: We will not give you an exit visa. I ask the honorable minister, and the esteemed deputy minister: Are you in a position to ban anyone from travelling abroad? Is leaving the country in your hands? What is the legal basis of your decision? You did this once, and you saw that certain people, even those held in high esteem by you, with passports at hand entered Saudi Arabia via other countries during the hajj. And you saw them there and they said to you: Hello, how are you? Why did you do this and create problems for us and yourselves? You did not achieve anything. My first point is legal and the political point is secondary.

I say that the Hajj Organization or the Guidance Ministry—because I do not know who made this decision.... [pauses] If someone has a passport, that means it does not matter. If someone has a visa, it means it does not matter. With a passport and a visa, why do you say: We will not let you go? You cannot say this. It is not within your jurisdiction to ban someone from travel abroad. What is this! How many people are there in the country who can do this? How many people can leave the country to go to hajj and be honored in this way? Let us pay a bit more attention to reality. In other words, limit the people to the extent that is called for, and by taking into account all the issues. [passage omitted]

Palestine—and about yesterday's agreement in Cairo—and Mr. Clinton's remarks—I really don't know; we must really ask the American President: who gave you the right—you, who are on the other side of the world—and on the basis of what criteria? Even if we look at it on the basis of common law—on the basis of what criteria do you say that Quds [Jerusalem] belongs to Israel? On the basis of what criteria?

You are the President of the United States. That is fine. The people of the United States voted for you. What right does this give you to interfere in the country of Palestine—or Israel, as it stands? These remarks do not have any legal or judicial basis, even on the basis of common law. That is the first point.

Secondly, let me say this to you: Palestine, the people of Palestine and Quds, all these agreements, remarks, signatures, and talks, as you have seen in practice, Palestinian jihadi groups are unanimously opposed to them. There are strikes every day. There are clashes every day.

There are killings every day. The pure blood of the martyrs of the shrine of Abraham in al-Khalil [Hebron] has not even dried yet. The blood of the martyrs of the incident which took place a few days ago has not dried yet. Do you think that by just gathering together in a country such as Egypt, for example, or elsewhere and signing a piece of paper you can solve everything? You can do away with past promises?

The people of Palestine are the true owners of Palestine. Quds is the permanent and eternal capital of Palestine and Palestine belongs to the Palestinian people. [crowd chants in support]

They commit the worst crime. The entire world says that it was the ugliest crime to massacre people while they were kneeling in prayer in a mosque. Then they say that it was done by an extremist group; it had nothing to do with the government. A few days later, they kill a number of other people. Then they say, yes, it was such and such a group and it had nothing to do with the government. They use trickery and wear different clothes, then they massacre Palestinian youths, and then they give some other explanation for the incident.

Let me tell you this: apart from military and war issues, the killers of the Palestinian Muslims in the Hebron mosque must definitely be brought before an international penal court sooner or later; whoever they may be. You say they are an extremist group, we say it was the government itself under the guise of an extremist group, and others say the order came from even higher up: from the United States or wherever else. What I am saying is this: an international penal court must definitely examine and try this crime and punish the perpetrators. [crowd chants in support]

We hope the Armenian Government responds to the Foreign Ministry statement as soon as possible. Procrastinating and saying we have not officially received a report yet, or that it has been rushed, and so forth, will not suffice. In any case, an incident has occurred and the plane carrying a number of innocent people has crashed. The Foreign Ministry has investigated the matter and announced the results. A reply must be made.

About our Afghan brothers, I do not know how to say it. Do they, themselves, know that there have recently been whispers in the world of appointing a guardian, of a partition, and so forth. Do you know what the outcome of the continuation of these wars and domestic clashes will be? For God's sake, for Islam's sake, leave these power struggles aside, stop these civil wars; put an end to the matter; do not break your recent cease fire; come and sit together and solve the problem and preserve Islam; do not ruin any further this ruined country. Otherwise one of oppressors or infidels who ruled your country for many years would come from the other side of the world, under the pretext that you cannot manage yourselves, and lay their hands on the country, and you will once again be enslaved by another power. Come and put an

end to the matter. We hope that your cease-fire will have a happy ending. [passage omitted]

Need for New Regional Alliance Noted

NC0304093594 Tehran SALAM in Persian 16 Mar 94 pp 12, 4

[Commentary by M. Paydar: "Tehran, Beijing, New Delhi: ASEAN Plus the ECO"]

[Excerpts] Early last week, only a few hours after the visit by Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen to Tehran, Indian External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh arrived in Tehran. Singh stated that the objective of this visit was to continue and expand the warm and cordial talks between India and Iran. [passage omitted]

Both India and Iran are large regional countries with a special role in Asian security, both because of the vastness of their territories, their command of maritime areas, their erudite work force, their history and culture, and above all, the fact that they belong to the Third World. [passage omitted]

The only weak point is India's differences with Pakistan, which has become a problem as far as stability in the Indian Ocean is concerned. At any rate, there is no doubt that if Islamabad is excluded from security dealings, the logic behind any regional political-security forecast or planning will collapse. For various reasons stemming from its understanding on its own national interests, Iran naturally wants some breathing space for its foreign policy. By nature, the Islamic Republic of Iran cannot limit itself to a small political, economic, and security sphere. Therefore, it has always tried to expand its strategic horizons in relationship to its position. It is natural that the Indian subcontinent, stretching as far as China's borders, is of special importance in this sphere of interest. Logically, in the effort to develop this area, it is practically impossible for Iran to ignore or exclude Pakistan. Of course, this part of the process may be delayed but it cannot be ignored. Therefore, any solution that ends the Indian-Pakistani dispute is not only to Iran's benefit but will also open up the last remaining door to cooperation among the south-central Asian countries and the Indian subcontinent, stretching from South Asia to east Asia. In other words, it would make possible the final steps for uniting the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations]. In this regard, ASEAN's Permanent Secretary General Singh, who is in Bangkok for a meeting of the organization's top officials, has stated that he will pay a visit to Tehran soon. Pointing out that this visit is very important, Singh stated that the ECO is extremely interested in expanding its relations with ASEAN.

But will the expansion of Iran's relations with some regional countries be contingent on the internal relations in ECO? No definite answer can be given to this question yet; the answer depends on to what extent ECO will allow its members—namely Iran—a free hand in

regional cooperation. Naturally if the ECO acts as a cartel like OPEC, members will face limitations, not only vis-a-vis India but also other countries and other economic-political alliances. Political and economic observers believe that if the ECO acts like a regional cartel, it will fail because none of the ECO members currently is economically competitive, with all its members facing economic problems.

Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the six Central Asian republics that were recently admitted to ECO all face extensive economic problems. Even in the most optimistic view, this alliance will only benefit the member countries themselves, and to an extremely limited extent. Therefore, it has no benefits for the Asian continent as a whole. Also, the increase the ECO membership poses a problem because it is not clear what benefits countries like Afghanistan and Tajikistan bring to it apart from absorbing the organization's limited capital, which mostly comes from Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan.

ECO's counterpart ASEAN consists of countries located in south and southeast Asia; and despite the fact that it is a regional body, it has also become an active and successful political and economic group of worldwide significance, and it also welcomes new members.

It is natural for ASEAN to want to expand its influence and for the ECO to seek an effective atmosphere in which to operate. But can these two alliances absorb each other?

Fortunately both sides have reasons enough to give a positive answer to this question. During the recent visit by Chinese Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen to Iran as well as the visit by Indian External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh, the topic of cooperation between the ECO and ASEAN was seriously discussed. Qian Qichen said that ECO-ASEAN cooperation and even the formation of a new organization from the two is important, adding that he had discussed the topic with Iranian officials. India too welcomes the formation of a new organization in the region because this would free it from unilateral dealings with each and every ECO member, notably with Pakistan.

It now appears that the formation of a new alliance in the region is an extremely necessary and inevitable fact and that the coming visit by the ASEAN secretary general to Tehran will be a very good opportunity for serious preliminary consultations on this topic.

Apart from according Iran, India, and China outstanding roles in Asia, a new alliance would also endorse the Islamic Republic's supremacy over a large part of Asia—from Asia Minor to western China. And as stated by a Chinese diplomat of the region:

"The formation of a new alliance in Asia would, first and foremost, divide the region among three immense political and economic poles. Iran and China would be the poles on either side, with India in the middle linking the other two.

"The first pole's scope would include Turkey, Afghanistan, and the newly-independent countries; and Iran will have full supremacy over this pole because of the vastness of its area, its seacoast, its air and land routes, its immense and relatively skilled manpower, its membership in OPEC and access to financial resources, its political stability, the general inclination of its economy toward capitalism, its membership in the Nonaligned Movement, and its fully independent policy."

Asked why Turkey would not assume such supremacy, the diplomat answered:

"It is clear that Turkey lacks all these factors. Also, the absence of political stability at home and its dependence on NATO are problems that cannot be ignored. This is extremely important to Iran, China, and India. Therefore, the western sector extending to the central area of this alliance will be, or should be, in the hands of Iran.

"Similarly, India can organize the middle section of the alliance because of its technical and economic potentials, its vast area, its supremacy over the Indian Ocean, the general inclination of world capitalism to invest in India, very cheap labor, and an annual economic growth rate above 8.5 percent, ranking second only to China. So it can be a bridge between Iran and China in this alliance. And, who knows, maybe this alliance can play a part in ending the differences between India and Pakistan, in which case Iran will gain another trump card."

This Chinese diplomat added: "The eastern front is also very important. Actually, the balance between the central and the western fronts is in China's hands. Because of its high economic growth rate of more than 11 percent, its high technical and agricultural levels and because of its generally favorable economy, it is impossible for ASEAN to make any decisions without taking China into consideration. Also, the regional economy is greatly affected by China's economy. In 1997, when Hong Kong is returned to China, this influence will increase. Therefore, China will seek ways to expand its economic influence."

Some political experts fully agree with the views of this Chinese diplomat and say that regardless of the reason, the formation of such an alliance at a time when countries are showing preference for political, economic, and security groupings and alliances rather than going it alone and at a time when the meaning of national development is synonymous with regional development, membership in supra-regional alliances appears to be imperative. And forming and belonging to regional and supra-regional alliances is now considered an important factor in international relations and stances.

A general glance at the all aspects of Iran's domestic and foreign policies shows an inclination toward such a polarization in this region. Both the Chinese and the Indians have much experience in workings and the uses of big alliances. Therefore, Iran should prepare its diplomatic machinery to participate in such an organization. The ECO is approaching the end of its traditional role, and because of world economic reality it will have to play a new role within a new entity; and the winner will be the one that adapts the best.